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RESEARCH REPORT

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THE EFFECT OF CREATIVE DRAMA ON STUDENT DISCIPLINE, SOCIAL MATURITY AND CREATIVE WRITING

FINAL REPORT

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Drama comes in the door of every school
with the child.

Winifred Ward
Creative Dramatics

The object of education is not to know
but to live.

Richard Boleslavsky
Acting: The First Six Lessons

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ABSTRACT

In this two-year study, middle school students in one gifted and two regular classes in grades 7 and 8 participated in a creative drama program taught by a professional actor-director who, in another incarnation, had been a secondary school English teacher. The program was intended to enhance student self-discipline and maturation and to produce improvement in language.

The grade 7 program lasted approximately 18 weeks and drama classes were held two to three times a week. In grade 8, the calendar time was 15 weeks but, with the exception of the gifted class, the students received about the same amount of drama instruction as in grade 7 as classes generally met three or four times a week.

Observation of classes was the primary research method employed. In addition, comparisons of creative writing and measures of self concept, learning style, and personality were made with classes drawn from schools of similar socio-economic backgrounds.

The techniques used in the drama program helped to build a variety of skills and to change behaviour and attitudes by opening up the students emotionally, socially and physically. Games, movement, trust and sound exercises, story telling, role playing, tableaux and improvisations were all utilized.

Students' creativity surfaced as they became intensely involved in, and obviously enjoyed, role-playing, creating, and improvising their own scenarios. Their participation contributed to impressive growth in language skills. They learned how to create coherent structure, gained a greater understanding of development of character, and grew very skillful in providing detail and vivid description. Language

growth was evident in the students' oral presentations, and both students and classroom teachers believe that the students' experience in role playing and developing improvisations was responsible for growth in writing skills.

There was noticeable maturation in behaviour which could be seen in greater self control, better understanding of self and others, more co-operative group work, effective problem-solving and an increased willingness to take risks. The students' ability to concentrate and listen became greater. Students increasingly used their own resources to resolve problems which arose in their work and interpersonal relationships. It became easier for boys and girls to work together. The students became more animated and less inhibited about expressing feeling. While almost all students experienced some personal growth, the most spectacular change in behaviour occurred in those who were quiet, shy, or emotionally closed down. Changes were especially notable among the special education students.

On the comparative measures, the experimental classes tended to show greater improvement than the comparison classes on the creative writing exercises. Although there was no statistically significant change in the pre- and post-test results on the measures of self-concept, learning style, and behaviour, which were administered to both groups, there were some slight indications of a consistent move to somewhat greater right brain preference and to a greater willingness to try innovative approaches on the part of the experimental students.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many people contributed, through their support and co-operation, to the first phase of this project. We are particularly grateful to Elaine Lester, Principal of Cummer Valley Middle School, who was among the primary instigators and ardent supporters of this project, and gave us entry into her school; to Esther Abiscott, a North York psychoeducational consultant, who helped in the selection of the instruments used to measure self concept, learning styles and behaviour; to Elaine Minsky who helped with the teacher interviews in grade 7 and provided valuable insights about the relationship of drama to student learning; to the teachers and students of the comparison schools who willingly complied with our numerous testing and writing requests; to the heroic work of the supply teachers who marked the writing exercises; and, most importantly, to the drama teacher, Gary Schallenberg, and the teachers and students in creative drama classes at Cummer Valley who 'included us in'.

PART I - INTRODUCTION

There are many definitions of drama. The common thread woven through all of them is the perception that drama has the capacity to enrich life and help in the internalization of human experience. The link between drama and education is seen as the ultimate concern with individual growth. Brian Way speaks of drama as dealing with the experience of the participants and believes it is concerned "with the individuality of individuals, with the uniqueness of each human essence." (Development Through Drama, 1967)

Richard Courtney's definition, though more elaborate, carries the same message: "Drama is the human process whereby imaginative thought becomes action; drama is based on internal empathy and identification, and leads to external impersonation (both overt and covert). It is this act of impersonation that creates meaning through interaction with the external world, specifically other people. In education, such spontaneous dramatic action takes the forms of: children's play, improvisation, and role play." (The Dramatic Curriculum, 1980).

Creative drama, therefore, may be seen as a process which seeks to reawaken imaginative thought in children and to heighten their awareness of how their personal experience is related to the world in which they live.

While sensitive teachers have always helped children interpret their relationship to their environment, the teaching of drama in schools has traditionally emphasized production and performance for an external audience. The emphasis on the internal audience of the individual child is relatively new in the curriculum, and there is not yet a great deal of comfort with it in the school setting because it does not lend itself readily to concrete measurement.

Many educators suspect that the creativity of children tends to be shut off by the nature of teaching in schools where the unquestioning acceptance of conventional wisdom is regularly rewarded and thus reinforced. As M. S. Vaughan states:

> "...our traditional programs in education are effective instruments of authoritarian society and antithetical to the development of creativity.....they have been effective and efficient in producing quiet, orderly, and courteous children, rather than flexible, sensitive, and courageous individuals." (quoted in Duke, 1973)

The rules of the game generally reward children who do not risk making mistakes, the ones who provide the 'right' answers. Exploratory or divergent thinking, problem solving, and a trial and error approach, through which children grope to solutions, are rarely encouraged. As well, play, that primal element through which we learn so much about socialization, co-operation, problem-solving, and creative thinking, is relegated to specific areas of the curriculum, such as physical education, early in the child's schooling. One function of creative drama is to reawaken and free the creative spirit in children by helping them explore a variety of different ways to deal with life situations.

Background

Pockets of creative drama have existed in North York schools sporadically and in a limited way. The present project results from the excitement generated by the effect of these classes on some of the students involved. For several years, Gary Schallenberg, a former teacher with wide professional experience in acting and directing, was funded by the North York English Department and grants from the Ontario Arts Council, to teach short segments of creative drama in several North York schools. In 1984-85 he was invited to work with one grade 9 and two grade 7 classes at Northmount Junior High School.

The powerful effect on the students who participated in the creative drama program in 1984-85 intrigued the teachers whose classes were involved, as well as the Principal, Elaine Lester, and a discerning Program Leader, Dr. Priscilla Galloway, all experienced educators in the North York system. Though no formal research was involved, these educators observed positive changes in behaviour in both group interaction and in individual growth. Groups who worked together became more caring and trusting. A greater sense of group responsibility developed. Individuals became more assertive, less self-conscious, and more willing to take risks. Behavioural changes were reflected in other learning situations. Social interaction improved as groups became more cohesive and willing to work together to resolve problems that arose, and as sex stereotypes were challenged.

Students also matured in a number of developmental skills as they became more focussed on listening to each other, with a concomitant improvement in concentration. The students' physical sense of themselves was stronger. And, perhaps more importantly, their imagination and creativity were given freer play as they struggled to find solutions to problems with which they chose to work. These were frequently drawn from life situations and dealt with the resolution of interpersonal tensions or with larger issues in which they were responsible for the safety or even the survival of members of their groups. There was an additional bonus: the classes were exciting and fun.

The teachers involved felt that the creative drama program had also provided an invaluable in-service professional growth for themselves. All involved, students, staff and administration, wanted the program to continue.

One major problem remained: how to continue this program which generated a high degree of excitement and appeared to have a carryover effect into many areas of learning. In a period of economic restraint, with emphasis on the 'basics' and on implementing the new requirements of OSIS, special funding had to be sought.

A search of literature on the effect of creative drama on learning revealed that there is much anecdotal reporting but little actual research data. The Ministry of Education was approached and expressed interest in obtaining such data, and in March, 1985, agreed to fund jointly with the North York Board of Education a two-year research study, employing Gary Schallenberg as teacher/catalyst.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine whether a creative drama program at the middle school level would:

(a) enhance student self-discipline and maturation;

(b) produce improvement in language, specifically creative writing.

The aims and objectives of the teacher/catalyst, outlined below, were in keeping with the purpose of the study:

- to create a relaxed, interesting learning environment
- to encourage a good group rapport with the teacher and each other
- to encourage students to 'think on their feet'
- to encourage working within a time frame
- to encourage students to be adaptable and flexible
- to encourage students to seek out the problems in the work rather than avoid difficulties
- to encourage divergent and convergent thinking
- to establish the drama room as a place of fun and learning

Experimental and Comparison Schools

In September of 1985 the experimental school, Northmount Junior High School, was converted to a Grade 6-8 middle school and renamed Cummer Valley Middle School.

Experimental classes in Year I of the study consisted of one gifted and two regular classes in grade 7. Comparison groups were drawn from schools of similar socio-economic backgrounds. In Year II grade 8 classes included as many of the students who had been part of the grade 7 study as possible. As a result of class placements and transfers in and out of the school, roughly 50% of the students observed in grade 7, Year I, were also observed in grade 8, Year II.

Some of the drama teacher's time was assigned to each of the comparison schools with the clear understanding that he would not work with the comparison classes.

Methodology

The first problem was to decide what use could be made of traditional research methods. How could the study best capture the extent to which the creative drama process was responsible for any growth in students' writing, behaviour, and maturity? How could it measure any effect on the teaching styles of the classroom teachers? How could it determine whether positive outcomes resulted from the program or whether they reflected the teaching skills of a very talented individual?

The researchers decided to use a combination of behavioural, learning style, and creative writing measures, along with observation and interviews. Paper and pencil measures and writing exercises would be given to both experimental and comparison groups so that the results of measures administered under similar conditions could be compared. A description of the drama process and behavioural changes which occurred would be obtained through observation, and teacher and student perceptions would be gathered by means of interviews.

Self Concept, Learning Style and Behavioural Measures

The following instruments were chosen:

1. The North York Self Concept Inventory, Junior High Level.
2. Six subsets of the Jackson Personality Inventory. These dealt with aspects of personality likely to be affected by the program, namely: conformity, energy level, innovation, social participation, organization and responsibility. As these measures were originally designed for an adult audience, researchers checked the appropriateness of their use for a young adolescent group with their originator, Dr. Jackson of the University of Western Ontario. He confirmed that they had been pilot-tested at the junior high level. These measures were pilot-tested in several North York grade 7 classes in May 1985.

Minor changes were made in language so that they would be more appropriate for the students in the creative drama study.

3. Learning Style

The Preferred Learning Mode, a brief 10-item measure of right/left brain preference, originally developed for an adult audience, was adapted by the researchers in collaboration with Jim Treliving of the North York Curriculum Department.

All of these measures were administered on a pre- and post-test basis to both experimental and comparison classes in both years.

Creative Writing Measures

In consultation with Ministry representatives, the agreed upon definition of creative writing was that it "shall be consecutive prose that has been invented or made up by the student without the editorial assistance of another person."

Three creative writing exercises were assigned in grade 7 and two in grade 8. These were administered by the classroom teachers. Instructions were read to the students and the opening sentences were written on the blackboard. Pictorial stimuli were shown to the students.

All writing exercises, from both experimental and comparison schools, were mixed and numbered on a random basis and marked anonymously after the completion of the final writing exercise each year. Marking was done by teams of three teachers trained to use the methodology developed by the North York Board Curriculum Department, and described in A Marked Improvement. Each piece of writing was read and marked holistically on a scale of 1-5 by each of the teachers on a marking team. The final mark assigned was arrived at by consensus.

Observation

Experiential learning is difficult to measure by paper and pencil tests. The most productive methodology focussed on process; what the drama teacher did, how the students reacted, and how the observations related to behavioural and educational development and change.

An observer was present for most classes throughout both years and recorded what took place: the nature of the activities; student participation and reaction; changes in behaviour, both personal and interpersonal; growth in oral and written language skills; reaction to the teacher/catalyst; and teacher participation and reaction.

Teacher and Student Interviews

Interviews with teachers were held each year to obtain their perceptions of the program and its effect on their students, and to learn whether and how the program was useful to them in their own teaching practice.

Student perceptions were obtained through small group interviews which were conducted following the end of the program in grades 7 and 8.

Program

The grade 7 program was divided into three segments: two months from mid-October to mid-December, 1985; two weeks in March-April, 1986; and six weeks from late April to early June. Classes met with the drama teacher an average of two to three times a week.

In Grade 8 there were two segments: six weeks from late September to mid-November, 1986; and two months from late February to late April, 1987. During the early part of the first segment the regular classes met two to three times a week. This was increased to four times a week about the middle of March. For the gifted class, the second segment was shorter, beginning during the second week of March and meeting only twice a week. There was considerably less flexibility in the scheduling of time in Grade 8 because the students were on a full rotary program.

Content of the program is fully described in the sections on the Creative Drama Process (pages 10-54).

Philosophical Approach

The approach of the drama teacher, Gary Schallenberg, is drawn from his own extensive experience as teacher, actor, and director. He is strongly influenced by England's Dorothy Heathcote, widely recognized as an outstanding pioneer in using drama as an educational medium. To Heathcote, drama serves "to expand children's awareness, to enable them to look at reality through fantasy, to see below the surface of actions to their meaning." This can be done by enabling the children to use what they already know. In Heathcote's view, most people use drama as a technique to cope with new or unsettling experiences. For example, when a significant event is coming up we frequently rehearse it in our minds to help ourselves come to terms with it, and thereby decrease our anxiety and increase our control over it.

Children already have much informal experience in the drama process; their experience needs only to be tapped and enlarged. In creative drama classes, children are helped to 'live the moment' through drawing from their own knowledge and deepening their understanding. (Wagner, Drama as a Learning Medium, 1976).

The ideas of Viola Spolin, Veronica Sherbourne, and David Booth have influenced Gary's work as well, and are expressed in the physicality of the work he does with students. Spolin and Sherbourne are also concerned with freeing children's intuition to help them become less dependent on a purely intellectual approach to problem solving. By building on their interpersonal and physical skills the creative drama program can give students a greater sense of control over their bodies, a better 'grounding', and a stronger sense of who they are.

The creative drama program at Cummer Valley was designed by the teacher/catalyst to break through a number of barriers: to open up the students physically, creatively, and socially; to get them to learn to listen, concentrate, and pay attention to what is happening to themselves and others; and to establish an atmosphere in which the students are pressed to find solutions to problems which create frustration and tension. Gary's aim was "to open a door for students, to stir them up so they are willing to risk trying new ways of doing things." To him, drama is a curriculum tool which is to be used to encourage this kind of growth and to expand and strengthen oral and written language development. In its most primal essence, drama uses the power of language and imagination to teach children important negotiating skills.

PART II - FINDINGS: THE CREATIVE DRAMA PROCESS*

THE AFFABLE WORLD OF GRADE 7

The Students' Introduction to Creative Drama

During the first class in October 1985, Gary explained what he was going to do and what he expected. From the discussion on the nature and purpose of drama, it was apparent that the students had little concept of what is involved. The most common perception was that drama is related solely to acting and the production of plays. Few students had been exposed to drama of any sort other than school plays. Their ideas about drama obviously came mainly from watching television.

Gary observed that television experiences are reflected in the early work students do in drama classes. As with most learning, students imitate the familiar because it is an easy starting point and because they do not yet understand what is involved. Thus students frequently start with TV models, particularly adventure and comedy situations, the former because they like the heroics and the latter because they all "think they can do it."

Class Dynamics

To Gary, a class is like an audience. Each has a different personality, and it takes a while to understand the unique personality of each group and to know the individuals within the group. To gain this understanding Gary takes a sounding of each class to gauge the atmosphere enabling him to determine which atmosphere to create, and to see how he fits and how much freedom he has. He looks for allies within the class and for those who tend to oppose or block. What he learns about the dynamics of each class allows him to help students work together.

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* Please note: All student names used in the following sections are pseudonyms.

As the dynamics of the three experimental classes were different, Gary adapted the program to suit each. His approach to the two regular grade 7 classes, though similar, recognized the difference in maturity and cohesiveness of these classes.

There was a general sense among staff in the school that the entire student body was not as mature as in previous years. Class A was ready to work early in the year but needed help in working together. Class B was academically less successful, more immature, and very difficult to keep working together. Their classroom teacher stated that it was the most difficult class she had encountered in her many years of teaching. The gifted class was a smaller and more cohesive group, as most of the students had been together since grade 3 or 4. These students were very articulate, usually concentrated intently on what they were doing, and had less difficulty than the other classes in working in groups which included both girls and boys.

A small group of special education and ESL students were integrated with the regular grade 7 classes for the drama program. The deficits these students presented ranged through a limited understanding of English, poor language skills, particularly in reading and writing, and emotional and behavioural problems. Another set of dynamics arose from their presence, mainly in the need to help them gain acceptance by the other students, and to encourage their active participation while building their self-confidence and communication skills.

Contact with Teachers

Throughout the year, Gary worked closely with the classroom teachers to ensure that his work meshed with theirs and met the needs of their students. He maintained similar contact with the teachers of the ESL and Special Education students who were integrated in the drama program. Gary also encouraged the teachers to become participants in the program whenever they wished.

Goals and Methods

The primary goals at this stage were to have students understand and use the concepts of tableaux and improvisation. Preparation for this was carried out in the first three weeks through vigorous workshops in which a combination of physicality, decision-making, and problem-solving was stressed. Students were asked to move in different ways, to make choices and decisions, and to solve problems. Movement and physical exploration were encouraged through rapid instructions to change direction or speed, to explore different levels and use of space, to move around quickly, in slow motion, alone, with a partner, to change partners, change direction or level, or to freeze in position.

Warmups and Use of Games

Because games have built-in rules which are unconsciously recognized and internalized, they were an important part of the process. They helped students understand the need for form and structure, which are important in writing and in the creation of improvisations, and served to energize and focus students. Games were also used to give the children a chance to play. This was particularly important for the gifted class with its strong emphasis on competition and high academic achievement.

All classes began with warmups, mainly games or movement. These served many purposes:

- to relax and energize students
- to get them to focus on what they were expected to do
- to enhance their listening skills through paying attention to instructions and to what they were doing in relation to what other members of their group were doing
- to prepare them for group work
- to help them gain better control of their bodies
- to break through some of the fear of working with the opposite sex, which is common in students of this age and, equally important, to have fun

The choice of the warmup exercise depended on the particular skill being taught, the mood of the class when they entered, and the students' requests. Typically these were games which demanded concentration and attention to what others were doing. For example, Atom, in which instructions are called out such as 'Atom 2', 'Atom 5', 'Atom 7', and students have to quickly form groups of that number; or a game in which students must call the name of, and make eye contact with, the person to whom they throw a ball.

If the students were scattered, noisy, disruptive, or resistant when they arrived, Gary helped to give them focus, allowing them to let off steam by playing high energy games, such as tag, or calmed them through games which required concentration or silence. For example, he would have them stare quietly at the clock for 20 seconds, then encourage them to make as much noise as they wished, then would again ask for silence, so that they became aware of the contrast. Quieting a noisy class was always done as an exercise rather than as an admonition.

Following the warmup there were exercises which required greater concentration and focussed on what the students did in relation to others, such as working in pairs to create mirror images, or following rapid instructions to do different things such as touch head to toe, back to back, elbow to shoulder, or knee to nose.

Gary often used physical exercises in which the students were challenged to work together and to do things in increasingly creative and intuitive ways, such as carrying people in different ways, forming interesting shapes, sometimes starting with two people and asking others to add themselves to the shape, choosing and performing circus acts, or representing a sports activity. The students were encouraged to use their bodies and space in different ways, to move in different levels, to work in slow motion. For example, one member of a pair would be asked to move a partner who was limp as a noodle in an unusual way. Their "ways" included rolling, dragging, and carrying the person on one's back.

The students gradually became more aware of their own bodies, more confident in their physicality, and more ingenious in what they did. Throughout the exercises, there was continual stress on safety, comfort, concern, care and responsibility for themselves and the people with whom they worked. Classes frequently ended with discussion of the work that had been done and how the students felt about it.

Introduction to Tableaux

In the third week, work began on tableaux. After creating simple tableaux based on familiar themes, students discussed the meaning and use of this technique. Tableaux were defined as frozen pictures or frozen actions. Gary compared the use of tableaux to the making of a film in which photos, in a series, flow into each other to create a whole, with the final impact of the whole created by the effectiveness of the individual scenes. He explained how tableaux helped to develop characterization and why it was important to know the characters they chose to represent: who these persons were, how old they were, where they came from, what they did, why they were there - not to become but to understand those people so they could portray them in a believable way. This mode of character development is based on Viola Spolin's concept of "developing character without talking about character."

In the next development, one person in each group was asked to arrange the other group members in a silent tableau and then include her/himself. The first groups to perform were stilted and awkward and the participants had difficulty relating to each other. Successive groups benefitted from what they observed and from Gary's critiques. The level of creativity increased and people and space were used in more interesting ways. One group formed and rode a bicycle, others created hockey and baseball games, a horse race, a scene in which a family portrait was being taken by a photographer, and a pagan ritual which included a dance and the playing of musical instruments.

To increase the level of complexity, the students were instructed to build tableaux which began with a single picture and progressed to five frames. As they were now telling a more complete story, Gary stressed the importance of character development and continuity. He explained that a story must have a beginning and a middle which lead to a believable end. Frozen dialogue, which provides time to study the facial and body expressions of fellow performers, was added to deepen the students' understanding of the relationship of the characters within a scene.

Succeeding tableaux were based on events or activities from the personal experience of the students. Then, to emphasize the importance of conveying feelings as well as action, emotionally charged themes were suggested based on situations of people in trouble. These might be set at an accident site, in hospital, in prison, or they might depict a farewell when refugees are forced to leave their homeland. To increase involvement, each student was asked to provide one prop or costume piece to help set the scene.

It was apparent from the class discussion that the students had gained a deeper sense of understanding of, and identification with, their characters and now found it easier to relate to the other characters in their scenes.

The Addition of Improvisation and Dialogue

Work was begun on improvisation, with emphasis on the use of dialogue. Following a brief discussion of the meaning and purpose of improvisation, the students worked in small groups, formed occasionally at random to encourage more mixing of boys and girls, but usually by choice. Scenes were improvised, based at first on suggested themes, and later on themes drawn from the students' own experience and imagination.

During the various stages of development of these improvisations, each group was asked to present what they had produced. Gary pointed out what worked, what didn't, and why. He explained that a major value of what the students were doing lay in working toward the solution of a problem. He also talked, when building a scene of the importance of creating a coherent structure which leads to the resolution of the problem, of developing realistic and believable dialogue, and of providing the dramatic tension necessary to hold an audience. He reminded the students that, in performance, they must listen to and look at each other, and must show appropriate emotion because inappropriate emotion or action changes the audience perception of what is happening. Gary also talked briefly about the relationship of drama to other forms of creativity such as writing and art.

Improvisations Based on Real Life Situations

The last two weeks were devoted to improvisations on themes related to real life as students perceived it. The students chose to deal with scenes of child abuse, drunk driving, and rescue from a house fire. Because of the strong dramatic tension, they also wanted to include rape and suicide but were dissuaded by Gary, who explained that they might find it difficult to handle the emotions that such themes would arouse.

The scenes built gradually. All groups were given an opportunity to show the development of their improvisations each time their class met. Gary criticized and encouraged, and suggested the students watch and learn from each other. He put pressure on them to strengthen plot, improve pacing and dramatic tension, and to add dialogue, assigning from ten to forty additional lines to each group. The usual reaction was dismay, but the assignment was also taken as a challenge. Most groups worked hard and co-operatively and created effective scenes. Several of these were outstanding in plot, characterization, sophistication, and presentation. Props and costumes were improvised from material at hand or brought from home.

From the Observer's Notebook

The following excerpt from the observer's notes provides an elaboration of the process and the dynamics which existed between Gary and the class:

> Students enter talking, quickly grow quiet. Gary sits down on small stage. Boys tend to cluster around him.
>
> Class discussion on what they are doing. Emphasis on developing clear story line, believable characters and dialogue; what it is, how it is created. Importance of being clear about nature of each character. Reminder about work done on understanding

how character thinks and feels. Stress on high expectation of quality of work and on having fun in doing it. Groups formed quickly and quietly. Most kids eager. Given two minutes to talk to each other to "learn to work together on building their presentation." Further instruction to involve all members of group and to ensure that each presentation has coherence - a beginning, middle and end.

Assignment is to create a circus act. There is tremendous level of excitement. Some groups talk about what they will do; others have natural leader who starts doing something and others help develop it. All groups asked to perform at once. Everyone paying attention only to what own group is doing. Then each group performs individually. Performance of first groups tends to be short, stilted, not much tension. As other groups perform they pick up on Gary's critical comments, get ideas from previous acts and tend to get better in timing, performance and content.

Kids do variety of things: comic trapeze act, lion tamer, tumblers, human cannon ball, tightrope act, stunt woman, clowns, strong man. One boy spontaneously plays a drum roll using a waste paper basket. Acts are introduced by a ringmaster in each group. Class is asked to make lots of noise - clap, cheer - so ringmaster must project voice. When one group hesitates, class spontaneously chants, "We want the Strongman." Everyone is involved, including the class teacher.

Gary talks to class. "This was a warm up. We've released energy and our minds are now alert so we'll begin with the scenes you've been working on." Discussion on need to build dramatic tension, on what it is and how it is created; how to alternate quiet scenes with scenes of action.

Students given 15 minutes for preparation. Again, first groups to perform tend to rush, use little dialogue and have almost no transition between scenes. As Gary points this out, succeeding groups add more dialogue, slow down their presentations. He tells students they all have good beginnings but they go nowhere; they need to create more tension and prolong scenes which are moving too quickly, without development. Specifies the number of lines of dialogue each group must add to build character and audience understanding. Kids dismayed at first but go back to work. Begin to use space better, elaborate on dialogue and plot. Noise level rises as they get more involved. Boys seem to deliver more of the dialogue (class teacher comments that this is unusual). General pattern is one of students responding to Gary's critique. Presentations become better organized, there is clearer presentation, pace is slowed and there is better character development. The audience grows more attentive.

Interesting plots develop:

. Child comes home from school, no one there, feeds dog, takes snack for himself, realizes there is a fire, calls for help, firemen arrive, dog trapped, asks them to rescue dog; they reply that they can't until fire is out; dog dies; child cries.

. Dog fight; boy's pet is bitten by rabid dog; scene at vet ending with death of dog, sadness of child.

. Bar scene: man comes in and asks bartender for advice about children: "I'm a single parent, don't know what to do about kids." Gets drunk, bartender refuses to serve him; gets obstreperous; son comes to take him home; he insists on driving; there is accident.

. Parents fighting over what child should read; child withdraws emotionally; father hits mother; she says, "Not in front of child."

In the final presentation, which occurred two days later, these scenes were fully developed. The students had fleshed out the characters and, by adding compassionate dialogue which showed a greater depth of understanding of their characters, had created mood and interest. They improvised props which helped define the setting. Their lines were delivered with considerable feeling, and many had added detail which increased the realism of their scenes. The performance of the boy whose dog died in the fire drew spontaneous applause.

Comment:

Adults reading these plot summaries may be concerned about the violence and sadness of these story lines. There are no happy endings in these scenes chosen and developed by the grade 7 youngsters.

This is not a reason for adults to impose their own choices on students, nor is it necessarily a reason for adults to be concerned about the emotional health and well-being of the students. The exercise has, after all, encouraged them to look for "drama in real life"; the endings follow appropriately from the situations and feelings portrayed. The students do not apply a superficial patina of contrived joy to the bleak situations they envisage.

It is always incumbent on the teacher, however, to observe closely and to provide opportunities as Gary does, for a wide-range of activities which include the release of tension and the building of trust. Young people need not be stuck in bleakness.

To adults who give young people opportunities for self-expression, their predilection for themes involving violence is familiar. They do, after all, have much vicarious experience with violence via television and reports from the world in which they live. They also have violent feelings. At this age, their feelings tend to be extreme and may be very appropriately expressed through scenes in which they enter into experiences where their emotions are accurately portrayed, but the events greatly exaggerate any scenes in their lives which have produced comparable feelings.

The students have to be able to portray the feelings with authenticity for the drama of the scene to work. However, an observer need not assume that this authenticity of feeling is based on actual experience. On the other hand, one need not assume it is not so based. Statistics on child abuse make every teacher aware of the probability that he or she is working with victims of abuse; sometimes strong themes in drama may be selected by students as part of a message. Such situations give the alert teacher an opportunity for careful observation; such scenes may later encourage students to communicate incidents of abuse.

In providing an opportunity for strong feelings to be expressed, however, the teacher must be prepared, as Gary was, to deal with those feelings professionally and appropriately. The teacher, like Gary, must also be prepared to set limits, and to set them in terms of what the youngsters can or cannot realistically manage, not in terms of "should" or "ought".

Participation of ESL and Special Education Students

Despite their difficulty with spoken or written language, the ESL and Special Education students did not lack creative ideas, and frequently made important contributions to the plot development, adding rich touches to the dialogue and action.

The Gifted: Helping Them Feel Their Way

Among the common goals agreed on by Gary and the teacher of the gifted class was to break through the highly cerebral and verbal style these children use in school, and to lessen their dependence on authority for direction and approval. Gary, therefore, employed techniques he did not use with his other classes, techniques chosen to help these students understand that spoken language is not the only means of communication, and that attention must also be paid to intuition, physical movement, and non-verbal communication.

The gifted class spent one period on an exercise devoted to a combination of non-verbal communication and caring. While half the students lay on the floor with eyes closed, the others met with Gary in the hall and were given instructions to return to their partners and teach them something without using language or sight.

As pairs formed, a definite boy-girl separation was obvious and was reflected in what the students chose to do. The boys tended to employ a more physical approach, such as showing their partners how to walk or somersault. The girls used a wider range of activities, many at a more personal level, such as teaching their partners how to remove and put on a sweater, to read, to walk with a cane, to sit down, or to get up on a counter. In their discussion of this exercise, the students were quite open and eager to talk of how they felt about doing things for others and having things done for them, of the enjoyment they experienced both in helping and being helped, of the pleasure of recognition for their effort which led them to try harder, and of the difficulties they encountered when they met resistance or lack of understanding of what they were trying to do and how they dealt with this by trying different approaches or another activity. Their reaction was, on the whole, positive and statements such as, "It felt good when I communicated what had to be done," or "It felt good to be patted, rewarded," were fairly common.

The non-verbal approach was continued in two periods in which the students were asked to do two things: to communicate by speaking only gibberish, and to explain to someone who did not understand English how to tie a shoelace.

There was considerable tension at first when the students were confined to speaking gibberish. Some felt compelled to produce unique sounds, while others tried to figure out what was the 'right thing' to do. The students began to relax and enjoy themselves as they got into the spirit and fun of these activities and realized that there was no 'right' way to do them.

As usual in this class, there was no shortage of volunteers for the shoelace tying explanation. Those who tried it, however, were frustrated and upset when they realized they could not make themselves understood through words alone, and that even explicit demonstration did not solve the problem. The students also admitted to feeling frustrated and angry when they were unable to make others understand the instructions they conveyed in gibberish. Unused to failure, they were particularly distressed by their inability to perform seemingly simple tasks.

In the next assignment the class was asked to solve a problem deliberately designed to create increasing levels of frustration. This exercise, a version of King's Fountain* (1989), required the students to become members of a desert tribe which was in desperate need of water. To obtain water they had to negotiate with a despotic ruler who was damming their only water source for other purposes. The ruler was played by Gary, assisted by the class teacher who, with great aplomb, played his equally despotic governor.

The students worked in groups to develop a sense of tribal life. The groups represented families, with members assuming roles of children, parents, or grandparents. They worked hard at defining their occupations and positions in the society as well as their relationship to others in their own group and to other groups.

The king set the conditions for negotiations. He was willing to meet with the entire tribe to allow them to argue their case for obtaining water and to hear what they would offer him in exchange for it. Costumes and props were constantly improvised. The king was offered pebbles representing precious stones, gold, or beautiful works of art. Music was played for him and a variety of services were offered.

The king refused all offers and posed another problem for the tribe. Now the people must come to his palace and take part in a competition to design a fountain. Three groups were formed to work on the design. If the king was pleased with any of these designs, the entire tribe would be given water.

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* Alexander, Lloyd. King's Fountain, New York: E.P. Dutton, 1989

The students' responses were ingenious. They created fountain shapes using their own bodies and objects that were readily available. After viewing the three designs, the king added one more condition. To ensure that his fountain would be unique, he announced that all who saw the chosen design would lose their tongues so they could not talk about it. The tribe members were given time to decide how they would respond. Various offers to mollify the king were made, with one old woman offering her life and that of her husband. None was accepted.

Student Reaction

It was fascinating to observe the students' reaction. Throughout this exercise, despite the increasing frustration they were experiencing, none of the students asked any questions or challenged the authority of the king. When at last, the tribe, having been pushed beyond endurance, rebelled and overcame the king and his governor, the students experienced a tremendous catharsis in the celebration of their victory. They ran around the room yelling and screaming, feeling a surge of power in their release from despotic control.

The discussion which followed was extremely interesting and revealed the students' dilemma. They found this a very difficult exercise at first because they could not figure out what the adults wanted. "We have to analyze what adults want. School is playing a game." It took them awhile before they realized that there was no expected response; they could rely on their own honest reaction to the situation to break free.

Storytelling

(a) Purpose

In this two-week segment, Gary introduced another element of theatre, that of storytelling, to show students how a basic idea can be deepened by exploring characters and relationships.

After a hiatus of more than three months, and with the advent of spring, the students needed to be re-energized. The first classes, therefore, were begun with vigorous warmups followed by the familiar, brief improvisations and tableaux based on suggestions made by the students. They chose themes involving both fantasy and reality. One class had a great deal of fun discussing how they could hold a rock concert on the moon.

(b) Methods

Gary used various stimuli to help students develop a story and increase their power to recall it. He might:

- start a sentence such as: "The man went to the store to buy ...." and ask each student to add a descriptive word or phrase after repeating everything which had been said before his/her turn;
- set a scene by beginning a story and asking the students to continue it;
- read the students the beginning of a story and have them provide the ending.

In one class, for example, Gary began a story about the disappearance of three travellers on a bus in Africa. The students were called on individually to continue the tale. They were uncomfortable at first and groped to find images, but as each youngster made a contribution to the story it became a fascinating, convoluted tale of adventure, with exciting and vivid descriptions of encounters with threatening animals and monsters and falls into and escapes from rivers and caves. It ended (amid gales of laughter) in a chocolate pit with the protagonists not sure whether to rejoice and eat the chocolate or to be apprehensive about being eaten themselves.

Throughout the process, Gary helped tie the story together. He pointed out that pat answers such as, "He's dead," stop the action, and he constantly pressed students to develop the story more vividly and descriptively.

Gary then read the beginning of a tale about a Japanese fisherman who is taken to the bottom of the sea by a turtle to meet the emperor. Endings were created orally, with individuals called on to make contributions to the story. Afterwards, the students worked in groups to produce endings which they either told or dramatized. Interesting and varied tales were created by all classes. These grew richer in description as the work progressed and Gary insisted they produce more descriptive and vivid language.

Observers were impressed with the quality of their stories and asked the teachers to encourage the students to write their versions in a regular class period.

Class B chose to write in groups and illustrate their work. Class A preferred to write individually with several students making tape recordings of their stories. The tales were delightful: interesting, exciting, and full of descriptive language. Three of these stories are reproduced in Appendix C.

The gifted class chose to make dramatic presentations. These were splendidly conceived performances and included a quiet Japanese narrated style, active comedy, and a Punch and Judy type of presentation with hand held illustrations of characters mounted on sticks. The students used ingeniously improvised props, such as drawings of swordfish mounted on rulers, and painted backdrops. They produced sound effects using voice and gongs. Students in all classes appeared to enjoy being read to and pressed Gary to read them the actual end of the tale.

Further Development of Tableaux and Improvisations

(a) Use and Effect of Silence

The final portion of the program continued and expanded the work on tableaux and improvisations. Warmup games were chosen to demonstrate how silence and intense concentration can be used to provide greater control and dramatic effect. Red light/green light, frozen tag, and King's Keys were played. The latter was extremely popular, frequently requested, and always played with a great deal of enjoyment. In this game a king or queen is seated on a chair in the centre of the room with eyes closed. A set of keys is placed near or under the chair, and a thief silently enters the palace in an attempt to steal the keys. The royal person is allowed five chances to defeat the thief but must depend solely on hearing to locate him or her. The thieves devised clever and devious ploys, such as throwing a shoe or an extra set of keys to divert the monarch's attention. This game created a tremendous amount of suspense and was always watched by the rest of the class with intense interest and in almost total silence.

Exercises which teach students how to move silently were introduced because they have a calming effect and increase self-discipline. Students were required to walk across the room in absolute silence, alone, in pairs, as a group and, finally, with a specific purpose in mind.

Some earlier exercises were repeated with the addition of the element of silence. Simple tableaux were called for and instructions given to use different levels and available objects as props. Students created scenes in which they watched TV or raided the refrigerator late at night, bugged a room, or stalked an enemy. Groups were given two minutes to create and then perform a circus trick.

(b) Use of Body in Relation to Positive and Negative Space

Exploration began on more complex uses of the body in relation to space. Students explored the creation of shapes using negative and positive space. Negative space was defined as the space created within a shape, and positive space as the space existing outside of it. Various configurations were formed. For example, to develop a greater understanding of how to use negative space, a small group of students was asked to create a shape and the rest of the class was instructed to become part of it, either passively by adding themselves to any of the negative spaces, or actively, by crawling through the spaces of the created shape.

An exercise in which one group was asked to move in slow motion as though in water, while the rest of the class made underwater sounds, led to the formation of various sea shapes, with the group coming together as a school of fish.

Letting Off Steam

Before work began on the final improvisations, Gary spent one period on a game where the students were encouraged to just let off steam. Two teams were formed on a random basis. The room was divided in half and newspapers were spread over the floor. There was a competition to see which team could dispose of all the paper on their side by throwing it over to the other side, and to see which team could clean up the fastest.

Tremendous excitement and noise filled the room during the playing of this game. Something new happened. Students who almost never spoke or participated, unless forced to, were obviously enjoying themselves, smiling, laughing, making lots of noise, and helping plan strategies to enable their team to win. A special effort was made to include the Special Education and ESL students.

In the discussion which followed, Gary pointed out that there was much to be learned from playing games and asked the students to describe what they had learned about themselves and others. They were dismayed to realize that winning even such a silly game had become so important that they found themselves cheating. They were surprised by the number of others who also cheated and they were taken aback at the realization that they were yelling at each other, with several girls being concerned that they had hurt the feelings of friends on the opposing team. Gary pointed out that it was possible to separate their feelings about wanting to win from their personal relationships.

Student Reaction to Improvisation

Some students confessed to initial resentment about improvisations. They were embarrassed when they didn't know what to say and were afraid of what others would think. They were also concerned about hurting other people's feelings. However, as they became more confident through experience, most students felt that they had gained a great deal from their work on improvisation.

Several students indicated that they preferred an intuitive approach to creating dialogue and chose not to think about it in advance in order to avoid interfering with the flow of ideas. Some believed the training in improvisation was good preparation for later life when they might have to perform before an audience without a script. Others felt that they were now more willing to take risks in front of the rest of the class. There was almost a unanimous agreement that their greatest delight lay in the freedom to create their own scripts.

Purpose of Pacing and Use of Monologues

A discussion of the purpose of differently paced scenes in television revealed considerable understanding. The students recognized that slow scenes are necessary to add suspense, build tension, create mood, tie up loose ends, and reveal more about the characters. They had an accurate perception of the purpose of monologue as well, seeing it as supplying information which can not be provided in the action scenes, and as a device which enables characters to reveal more about themselves - what they are like, what they think and feel.

Final Improvisations

For the final improvisations, the culmination of the year's work, Gary asked the students to create scenes in which there was an element of danger, and in which at least one of the group members was hurt or handicapped and needed protection.

In the first stage of development, these scenes were to be done in total silence. Dialogue was introduced, at first in whispers, then aloud. As the work progressed, more dialogue, monologues and narration were added. Most groups worked well. Some groups made worthy but unsuccessful attempts. Gary either helped them or explained why the scene did not work and suggested they try something else. Most problems resulted from failure to know and develop their characters or to listen to each other. As the students came to understand the problems, they found ways to resolve them.

These scenes were considerably more sophisticated than the ones created earlier in the year. The plots were more complex, mature and logical in structure and the characters were fleshed out and more believable. Some plots dealt with concentration camp conditions and escapes; others with robberies (one of an art gallery, another of a MacDonald's outlet); and a number involved plane crashes, war scenes (usually set in Viet Nam), jail breaks, or risks taken by sneaking into forbidden places.

The performances were more confident, sometimes outstanding. There was a far more elaborate use of props with some students using makeup to help establish character.

Observers reported an increase in involvement. Students who had been either passive or reluctant to work in groups were now taking a much more active role. Most of the students came into the room and, without direction, immediately started to work on their scenes. Some skipped their breaks to set up props and to practice.

Effect on Behaviour

There was a noticeable maturation in behaviour. The girls had become more assertive; they began to choose more active roles. With encouragement from Gary, they broke through some stereotypes. For example, in war scenes some girls opted for roles as pilots, platoon leaders, and doctors. A very effective and realistic portrayal of a newspaper photographer covering a war front was given by a formerly rather quiet girl. She brought a camera to class and insisted on taking pictures of the wounded over the protests of the field medical staff. A female view of the process of change in behaviour was expressed by another girl: "We can do anything the boys can do. They all want to play Rambo, but that's not what we want to do." The boys became more open and willing to risk showing their feelings. A brief description of some of the more dramatic cases provides a sense of what happened.

In the gifted class, three boys who had been rather distant and aloof most of the year became very involved. Fred, who had never volunteered any ideas, began to do so freely. Peter, usually a passive observer who rarely expressed any feeling, began to talk openly about how he felt and to take an active part in developing the final scenario. The most spectacular change took place in Edward, who had been emotionally closed down, physically rigid, and mentally very resistant. Gary spent a lot of time with him both during and after class, talking and initiating physical contact with wrestling holds. In the last few weeks of the course Edward began to laugh and play. His body relaxed. The character he created for the final improvisation was more open and honest than anything he had done before, and he gave a superb, realistic performance.

In the regular classes, there were also indications of exceptional changes in behaviour. Elijah and Jack were two outsiders who clung to each other all year and participated only on the fringe of any group. Their writing skills were minimal and they resisted writing their final improvisation. What they did write was badly done. Their oral performance, on the other hand, was well structured, very real and quite funny (see Appendix D). The observers taped it, had it typed as a script and gave them copies. They could barely believe they had produced anything worthwhile, though they were obviously pleased at the recognition their work brought them. Their teacher reported that their classroom behaviour began to change. They were participating socially, and she was astonished when they actually produced some homework.

Then there was Karl, whose teachers complained about his lack of writing skills. Though these did not improve greatly, his oral use of language became extremely effective. He had an almost innate sense of drama and a splendid sense of how to set a scene. He was a sensitive observer of life, and his attention to detail and evocation of emotion in performance was remarkable.

On one occasion, half of one class was absent because they were rehearsing for the school's music night. The remaining students, who tended to be at the lower end of the scale in academic achievement, and who usually accepted the leadership of the other students, came into their own. They continued working on their improvisations and produced work of exceptional quality. However, when the rest of the class returned, they stepped back into the shadow. Gary made a point of commenting on the high quality of their work and encouraged them to feel more confident of their own ability and to be less awed by the other students.

Change was especially noticeable among the special education students. Janet, who was shy and withdrawn and never spoke, began to talk. Others found acceptance and recognition in this class and began to participate more actively. Donald and Mark, twins who had always looked sad and withdrawn, began to smile and laugh, play, and take active roles in the improvisations. Gary horsed around with them a great deal, and it was delightful to see them opening up and enjoying themselves.

Roger, a problem to himself and everyone around him, was a towering six-foot black student, learning disabled, awkward and unsure of what to do with his large physical stature. He had a tremendous need for recognition and physical affection. He was constantly teased because of his size and it was sometimes difficult for smaller students to work with him in the physical exercises because of the disparity in size and physical strength. His behaviour was erratic throughout the year, but he frequently contributed original ideas, loved acting, and wanted the class to perform before an audience. His written skills were poor but, with the help of his Special Education teacher, he taped and played to the class the ending he wrote to the tale of the Japanese fisherman. It was a sensitive piece of writing and very revealing of how he saw himself as an "ugly, big, brown thing." During the playing he sat huddled against the wall with his hands covering his face. The observers asked for the tape and he repeatedly promised to bring it, but eventually claimed to have erased it.

Teacher Participation

Two of the grade 7 teachers participated in the classes, one quite regularly and the other sporadically. The third was an active observer as she was teaching this grade for the first time and was feeling her way. Nonetheless, she made frequent eye contact with the students and provided useful observations about them. She enjoyed playing an active role when her class was involved in their improvisation of King's Fountain.

All of these teachers reported that they had incorporated drama techniques in the other subjects they taught. Because a core program was in operation in grade 7, this occurred primarily in social studies and language classes.

THE ROLLER COASTER WORLD OF GRADE 8

Goals

The grade 8 process was similar in many ways to that of grade 7. The primary goals, however, were somewhat different. These were: (a) to deepen the drama experience by building on the work of the previous year, (b) to achieve greater intensity and subtlety through the introduction of more difficult techniques, (c) to help students gain a greater sense of self through individual and group work, and (d) to improve descriptive writing. Thus, longer periods of time were devoted to the exploration of themes and more writing was demanded of the students.

Class Dynamics

The students were glad to see Gary and looked forward to the drama classes. There was a noticeable change in behaviour from grade 7. The students who walked in the door in September were very different from those who left in June. They had not only matured physically, but they were also more independent in spirit and more resistant to what was imposed on them. They exhibited a spirit of rebellion against adult authority which was in conflict with their need for adult understanding, acceptance and support.

Each class made different demands on the drama catalyst. In the regular stream, Class A was reasonably amenable from the start but needed time for refocussing. Class B was rather restless and physical and required long warmups to focus their energy. Gary found it necessary to take them back to grade 7 work to help them regain a sense of confidence and security.

The gifted class seemed to be in trouble with most of their teachers. These students were rebellious, refused to work, and complained that everybody expected too much from them. Gary encouraged them to talk about why they were acting up. Many of them revealed feelings of inadequacy ("we are not gifted in everything"), and thought that there was an unreasonable demand on them to be more mature than other 13 year olds. They were also anxious about the pending separation from their school 'family' when they entered high school the following year. They wanted their own agenda in drama, and still needed constant approval and affirmation of the quality of their work.

Gary was acutely aware of the volatility of grade 8 students and adapted his program to accommodate their roller coaster moods, taking his cues from them on a day-to-day basis. Nonetheless, he continually stressed the need to take drama seriously, and he expected a high level of effort and achievement.

Deepening the Drama Experience

Grade 8 work began with short-term assignments to give the students a variety of experience and enable Gary to assess the situation, determine what review was needed, and prepare for a new venture into deeper waters.

Following a period of rebuilding skills and confidence, the process of deepening all aspects of drama began. Basically, this consisted of assigning students a problem to which increased levels of complexity were continually added. New and more difficult techniques as well as variations of techniques learned in grade 7 were used.

Because of the students' growing confidence, skill and maturity, warmups, which were needed frequently at the beginning of the year to help energize and focus the young people, were rarely necessary in the second term.

The focus of the early work in grade 8 was on building the skills needed for greater in-depth work in role playing and improvisation. Various methods were used; the following examples are typical:

Heightening Concentration and Listening

Complexity was the key word in much of the new work. Concentration and listening skills were strengthened by means of an exercise in which the students worked in pairs, with each partner expected to defend an idea. The students were directed to maintain eye contact throughout this exercise and to begin by speaking simultaneously without listening to each other. They were then required to support the opposing view, speak one at a time and listen carefully to the reasoned arguments of their partner. The last instruction given was to physicalize their work without making physical contact; to use their hands and faces to convey greater expressiveness.

There was bedlam at first as the students went at each other, obviously enjoying the opportunity to make lots of noise. They soon grew frustrated because there was no real communication, and we could sense their relief when they could hear and be heard. They began to listen to each other with a great deal of attention and concentration.

Using Group Co-operation to Increase Physical Control

It was fascinating to watch what the students did in a week-long exercise which required concentration and group co-operation to make it work. Groups of eight formed circles connected by six-foot poles which they balanced with one finger of each hand. They were expected to follow the group leader and move without dropping the poles. Complexity was added by having groups create interesting shapes or knots. There were problems at first in maintaining the physical connection. As group unity increased, the work became more daring. The students climbed over and under the poles, turned around, moved to different levels, and recreated the original circle. The knots they formed became incredibly intricate, requiring great concentration and physical control to execute and maintain.

Movement as Stimulus to Plot Creation

Movement was used to facilitate the creation of individual scenarios which depended on a triangle relationship. Students were given a series of increasingly complicated directions by Gary. They were instructed to walk around the room and to use as much space as possible; to keep their eyes open but to tune in to themselves; to move closer together; to choose one person to observe secretly, and to pay attention to that person; to move, change speed or direction, always keeping that person in sight; to open up and use lots of space; to add another dimension, that of spying on one person while avoiding another; to create a triangle with these two while paying attention to both the physical and inner sense of how it felt; to add an expression of pain when they saw the person they were following; to phase everyone else out and to add sound when they saw the person they wished to avoid.

There was discussion of the dynamics of being part of this triangle. The students expressed interest, understanding, and frustration: "I love it, but it's difficult because it's like the group trying to find itself." "It makes me feel guilty because I have a sense of being spied on." "It's frustrating. Whenever you get a fix on a person she moves. It's hard to both follow and avoid. You always find yourself adjusting."

Gary then asked the students to devise plots based on the triangle relationship. To help evoke mood, the lights were turned off and students lay on the floor with eyes closed. Gary reviewed what they were to do: "Think of why you are avoiding, why you are watching. Add an element of fear. You're in trouble; detail the kind of trouble. The emphasis is on who you are, the development of character, detail, atmosphere, setting, time, and that no one else knows what you are doing. Now get up and walk about. Think about it. Work on your own, then move into the situation you are in, focussing on the feeling in the scene."

The students began to move quietly, showing intense concentration. Lights were turned on and plots were shared. Imaginative detective, science fiction, and suspense tales unfolded. Gary pressed for more detail and fuller characterization, advising the students: "To accept 'the truth of the moment'. Don't give the secret away when in role. Accept it as 'me in an unusual situation'. Learn from it, especially about yourself."

Building Trust

The techniques used for building trust were similar to those used in grade 7 but there was greater emphasis on co-operation and sensitization to the needs of others. Students worked in pairs with mats on the carpetted floor. Each partner, in turn, would fall back into the arms of the other. Gary stressed the need to pay attention to their partners' comfort and safety, and suggested that, where a partner was fearful or unsure, work could begin at the floor level. Attention, caring, and concern were evident throughout this exercise, and the willingness to take risks increased as partners proved gentle and sensitive in their handling of each other.

There were many volunteers to lead a blind exercise in which each group, with eyes closed, stayed together by placing their hands on the shoulder of the person in front of them, and followed wherever their leader went. The groups were led through the school and outdoors. Most groups worked well, but two fell apart. Gary asked the students to reflect on what happened in their groups. They recognized that total trust had been possible only when the leaders paid attention to the needs of their members and showed concern about their safety, and that groups experienced difficulty when the leaders took unnecessary risks or were more concerned with their own needs.

Stimulating Imagination and Creativity through Role Play

(a) Think on Your Feet

Students' ability to provide quick and imaginative responses, to think on their feet, was encouraged through many kinds of role play. For example, a chair was placed in the centre of the room, and students were challenged to use it as some other object. They were shy at first and reluctant to volunteer, but gained courage from watching each other; soon ideas flowed rapidly. Action moved from timid and conventional to exceptionally creative and sophisticated scenes. Pairs began to volunteer: a clever bit of caricature was played by two girls; one used the chair as a coffin, lying in it with arms crossed, while the other looked down on her and said in a voice filled with sadness and regret, "Oh, she was such a good woman!" An autistic boy displayed a wry sense of humour. He placed the chair on his head, put his hand in his shirt and announced that he was 'Na-pol-eon'.

Gary felt that these classes were ready for improvisational tag, an exercise designed for Grade 10 and 11 students. In this, two people improvise a scene. They are joined by another person who must replace one of the pair and change the action. After a period of difficulty, with some push from Gary, fine, creative work emerged. For example, the action moved from wrestling, to rockabye baby, to a groom carrying a bride over the threshold, to a scene of death and mourning.

(b) Solve a Problem

Gary felt Class B would benefit from working on a problem-solving exercise which would challenge their creativity. Working in pairs which were stuck together for life, the students had to explain how this had happened, what problems it created, how they coped, and how they felt about the situation.

The level of involvement was very high and there was an enthusiastic response to the suggestion that they hold a Stuck-Together-People's convention to share their experiences.

The class teacher acted as the official welcomer, and two boys volunteered to chair the convention. The students brought props and costumes.

The presentations were wonderfully imaginative, amusing and sensitive. Among the more memorable were the following:

. Two girls who spoke in unison. When they visited a voodoo dollmaker in Jamaica, a doll was accidentally knocked into a pot of glue, leaving them stuck together. They had found solutions to some practical problems, such as feeding each other and taking showers in the rain. They were not unhappy about their situation: "We enjoy being stuck together and would be sad to be separated."

. Dr. Josephine and her male friend. While visiting her uncle's laboratory, they accidentally drank something magnetic which they mistook for grape juice. According to Dr. Josephine, they had an unresolved problem: "We're married to different people and whenever we want to go out his wife has a headache." When her partner was absent on the second day, she readily adapted and explained that they were now separated because an antidote had been found.

. A group of three boys who announced that they were Al Capone and friends, and that they were locked together with handcuffs which could not be opened. They wore fedoras, false mustaches and trenchcoats. These were students whose participation in class was often reluctant and sometimes negative. They really enjoyed the limelight, were very creative in their presentation, worked well as a group, and stayed in character throughout the convention. When asked about the main problems they faced, they replied: "It's hard work to be crooks. Guido likes shiny things and he'll be pretty angry if he doesn't get them."

. Another group of three, two boys and a girl, who told of being Arctic explorers. The girl was stuck to one of the boys, "like an ice cube when it's wet". This situation created a lot of suffering because the combination of two males and one female created a great deal of friction, and they had all lost their jobs, spouses, and families.

. One of the most sensitive and effective presentations was made by two boys, one black, one white. As robots who were fused together when a nuclear reactor sprang a leak, they appeared in complementary make up and costume. One was dressed in a white top and black pants and the other in a black top and white pants. Their faces were painted half black, half white. This pair described their situation as one they would not have chosen but which had happy consequences: "We used to be enemies but now we are friends. We learned that opposites can learn to be friends."

Group Drama

Adding Complexity to Role Playing

The dynamics of working in a large group are different from those operating in small group work. Relationships are more intricate, solutions more difficult, and a greater measure of risk-taking is necessary. Gary spoke about the necessity of risk taking in drama. "The difference between theatre and drama is that when we sit in an audience we judge. It's scary to be judged. The minute you stand up you've separated yourself from the audience." He encouraged the students to take risks even if they had difficulty, promising that they would gain confidence with experience.

Two types of group drama were used. One of the regular classes worked on King's Fountain. It was interesting to see the difference in reaction from that of the gifted class in the previous year. The grade 8 class was about one-third larger and much less cohesive. The class did not react as a unit. About two-thirds of the students pursued the given plot of attempting to satisfy the despotic king's desire for a magnificent fountain in return for a supply of water. The others continued to work in small groups on related subplots. One boy dressed as an elderly priest, carried a Bible, and drew others to him in search of the 'truth' he wanted to bring to the king. A small group of girls kept watch over a secret hoard of water. Another group was preoccupied with the impending birth of a child.

The main plot evoked a myriad of creative ideas, many similar to the ones the gifted class had produced. One of the most original was a song composed and sung to the king. The essential difference in the way these two classes handled the same problem lay, not in the creative response, which was equally impressive, but in the refusal of the grade 8 class to accept the situation unquestioningly. At every stage of the drama, they challenged the authority of the king and his right to make such demands on them. Their rebellion, which also ended in overthrowing the king, came sooner. Their frustration was less than that of the grade 7 gifted class and their rejoicing in victory was less exuberant.

The other two classes faced a different problem. They were members of a community in which all basic needs were met. People were free to do as they wished, and only one rule existed which could not be disobeyed: reading was forbidden.

Groups were formed to carry out various responsibilities, such as child care, education, and defense. Gary, in role, announced that he had called a special meeting because he had learned that some people were reading, and the community would have to decide what to do. There was a strong reluctance to take any action at first because of the loyalty felt to group members. Gary found it necessary to remind the students that they were in role before they were able to seek solutions. Their suggestions ranged from the benign to the draconian: remove the elders because they have failed, have an undercover store where reading material would be available, burn any books found in private possession, hold a purification ceremony for the offenders, brainwash the readers, spy on each other, banish the guilty and burn down their homes.

There were heated arguments about some of the solutions. Many felt that burning books would violate a sacred heritage to preserve their past. There was concern about the use of draconian methods and any violation of their sense of justice: "We're a peaceful community." "If we burn homes it's not fair to the rest of the family."

One class decided on banishment, and the exiles met to plan their defense. They argued that the denial of reading was an attempt to keep them from learning about the outside world, or to prevent any challenge to authority.

In the other class, Gary exercised more control and secretly identified the people in the reading cult. They were told not to reveal that they were readers because this would lead to banishment. Instead, they were to choose partners they had not worked with before and attempt to obtain a confession from them. The students enjoyed this exercise enormously but found it difficult to stay with 'theatrical truth' when they were asked to deal with issues about which they had strong beliefs or feelings.

Learning from from the Past

Storytelling always evoked a great deal of interest and active involvement. Gary used a variation with the gifted class. He encouraged them to gather tales from family members as a way of extending communication and of learning from the wisdom of elders. He cautioned them strongly about the need for sensitivity, especially if they evoked painful memories, such as wartime experiences or loss of family members. "Do it with humility, compassion and respect."

Gary recommended that students ask family members to re-tell folk and fairy tales from their own childhoods, often passed in other countries, in addition to, or instead of, personal reminiscences. He assured the students that highly personal or private stories, or stories which might embarrass themselves or their families should not be revealed; it was not a problem if a student had done the assignment but had no story to share.

The students were fascinated by these stories and were amazed at their similarity, despite the diversity of backgrounds. They related tales gleaned from parents and other relatives about immigration to Canada, early memories of school or tales from the old country and they shared some of their own early childhood recollections. They loved storytelling and wanted more time for it. They showed maturity and judgement in the stories they shared. Some felt the experience had opened lines of comunication with their families. "It was incredible. It created conversation at the breakfast table for the first time."

The Effect of Sound

How to use sound to enhance a story, help create mood, and identify the setting was tackled in different ways. Gary read a story to the class and asked them to think about how sound would increase its effectiveness, and what sounds were needed. Situations were described and groups were asked to bring them to life using sound. Then, students were asked to close their eyes and identify the sounds. The different texture of sounds and their effect on feelings was discussed. Using voice as the primary instrument, the students were ingenious in producing sound which created mood and images which identified the locale.

Final Improvisations

Work on the final improvisations began in early March. The time allotted was longer and the work more intensive than in grade 7. Gary's intent was to challenge the students to explore in greater depth and intensity, as well as to build on the skills they had acquired in their two years in drama. He also wanted the students to understand how writing helped in the creation of more effective scenarios.

The assignment was based on a primal element of drama: being stuck in a situation, or as Dorothy Heathcote describes it, 'man in a mess'. The students were confronted with life or death predicaments which they had to resolve. Further complications and frustrations were introduced every day. Gary constantly exhorted them not to take the easy way out, and encouraged them to work through, and not around, problems.

The students rose to the challenge. We witnessed their struggle and frustration with the constant demand to adapt to new situations and to present their work at different stages of development. Their persistence was impressive. Though they drifted away from time to time, they never deserted their work and pressed on to find solutions.

The classes worked in different modes, depending on their strengths and needs. Tableaux, storytelling, sound exercises, individual and group presentation, and writing were interwoven with the work on scenarios whenever Gary felt they would deepenen or strengthen the quality of the work.

Regular Classes

One class worked on a problem drawn from a combination of themes which had recurred in their earlier improvisations - themes of water, military activities, and escape from danger. Gary's intention was to start with small group work and eventually tie the work of all groups together.

The setting was a peaceful, harmonious island community which was threatened by a military takeover. The students drew the island on the blackboard. They discussed, and agreed upon, demographic, geographic, and defense details, then chose the roles they wanted to play. A new problem was introduced each day, and the students were expected to adapt to a constantly changing and increasingly frustrating situation. Gary reminded them of the importance of knowing their characters and understanding the situation they were stuck in; that they faced a situation which jeopardized themselves and their community.

Each development was played out in small scenarios. Early scenes were built around clandestine meetings held in public places, such as restaurants, where people began to question and cautiously discuss the situation. Tension was heightened when military personnel appeared and questioned their right to be in public together. As suspicion and distrust increased, meetings became more secretive and were held in private homes. The level of anxiety and fear grew as word spread that many people had been arrested and 15 year olds were being drafted.

As the scenario developed, variations were introduced to deepen emotional involvement, understanding of character, and adaptability of response. Students were asked to join a scene, one at a time, and to deal with the problems they encountered. They were quick to size up the situation and enjoyed improvising whatever role they were assigned. At a later stage, everyone was asked to tell part of the story. Their oral images and descriptive language grew richer and more exciting. In role, they began to add depth and emotion, especially in their monologues. They dealt with the question, "What am I going to do?" in their written work.

Further complexity was added. They learned that there would be a complete military takeover within forty-eight hours. Their options were limited: they could escape or rebel. Because they felt helpless without weapons, the problem became how to escape and where to go. They wrote heartfelt and passionate letters to friends and relatives describing their situation and pleading for help.

They examined their situation. Gary's advice to them was: "Think about how all the groups will come together, what brought them here, who you are, what you want to do. Don't forget your original roles. Look at the common threads. You are under pressure to survive. What is the setting? The danger? You are being attacked by an enemy and threatened with loss of freedom. What are you going to do? How are you going to escape?"

Working in small groups, participants considered their resources and their limited options. They devised many plans for escape which required co-operation and trust, such as sharing or stealing boats or planes, building an underground tunnel to the docks, or arranging for outside help. One group decided to stay and go underground. There was a great deal of excitement because of the need for secrecy.

It was very touching to see the young people's concern for their children and each other, despite their growing desperation and fear. There was considerable maturing as the students became more comfortable about working in groups which were not of their own choosing.

This class ended with a sharing of scenes and a reading of their writing. They listened attentively and appreciatively to each other. The letters and diary entries which revealed their fears and concerns were powerful and affecting, and reflected the growth which had occurred in the depth of their understanding.

There were some unexpected developments in this class. The ESL students, whose participation had been marginal because they were embarrassed about their limited English, began to take a more active part. Gary encouraged them to write and read their letters in their native languages and the class listened with great interest to the readings in Chinese, Korean and Persian. The ESL students said they had never felt accepted in the group before.

It was particularly startling to hear, for the first time in two years, the voice of Violet, the usually silent and bewildered-looking special education student. When Gary asked her to read her letter she refused. "No," she said, "I don't want to speak!" Despite her refusal, she surprised everyone by reading a letter in which she asked for help and advice from an uncle in Hong Kong. Something happened in this class which triggered Violet's willingness to speak and to write. To the astonishment of her English teacher Violet produced a well-written four-page story for the final creative writing exercise, the first piece of writing ever received from her (Appendix F).

An unusual shift in leadership occurred in this class. The most macho of the boys, who took early control of the direction of some of the scenarios, began to lose ground to several girls who quietly and effectively assumed leadership of their groups. This was especially surprising as two of these girls had been among the most negative in their response to drama in grade 7.

The other regular class worked in small groups on themes of their own choosing. Their plots featured a bank robbery, an escape of prisoners from East Germany, an accident in which a group of young people was injured by a rock slide, an airplane crash, a camping trip which was disrupted by attempted murder, and a scientific expedition in space.

In the early stages, Gary made extensive use of tableaux to give sharper focus to the work. Tableaux were used to slow down the action, provide continuity, and enable students to see what still had to be done. Occasionally Gary stopped the action and asked students to talk in role about their thoughts.

As the work progressed, different modes of writing were assigned. The students' monologues, describing what was happening and how they felt about it, led to greater depth of feeling. Their narrations helped provide continuity, and they gained skill in improvising narrations when Gary called for a switch in narrators during the presentations. Written dialogue served to strengthen scenes and to deepen understanding of the characters and the relationship between them. Some of the best writing came from students who usually did not write easily, nor well.

When the students felt frustrated and complained that writing interfered with the development of their work, Gary reminded them of the purpose of writing and advised them not to let the script dominate their work.

This class ended with presentations of their scenarios. The groups reviewed the status of their work, examined what was happening, and actively negotiated ways of dealing with the problems which remained. The stocktaking led to more polished and detailed scenarios. Sound effects were added and costumes and props were brought or improvised. The students obviously enjoyed their presentations and handled them extremely well, enabling the observers to appreciate the growth which had occurred in their work. There was a noticeable improvement in their ability to develop on the spot, to demonstrate greater honesty in feeling, and to show an increased understanding of role. The quality of the youngsters' oral and written work grew with the development of their scenarios.

This class had matured a great deal. They needed little help from Gary when asked to evaluate each other's work. They discussed the effectiveness of the action and characters, what worked, what didn't, the believability of the dialogue, and the problems the protagonists had not resolved.

As the year progressed, there was a substantial increase in energy level and concentration. The students moved more quickly into their work and frequently became so absorbed that they did not want to leave at the end of the period.

It was especially interesting to see the growth in the work of some of the weaker students. This was most apparent in the bank robbery scenario. In its early stages, the plot and characters were so thin that the idea was almost abandoned. Gary encouraged these students to work through their problems. They were the only group who added new scenes almost daily. As their story became more complex and their handing of it more assured, they were able to carry off a difficult feat, which no other group attempted, that of playing three scenes simultaneously. The exceptional improvement in the quality of the work of these students was particularly rewarding to observe.

The Gifted Class

The gifted class returned to drama three weeks later than the other classes, and met only twice a week. Their class teacher wanted more time with them because she felt they had missed too much language instruction, partly because of their unco-operative behaviour at the beginning of the year, and also because many members of this class had been involved in other special programs.

Gary was intent on challenging this class as much as possible. He wanted to both sharpen their improvisational skills and imagination and to break through their recalcitrance, boredom and anger. Each student was given a copy of the following native legend:

> A long, long time ago when people believed that spirits ruled the world, there was trouble. The people gathered together and lifted their hearts and voices to the sky. "Great Spirits, the land is dying. Your people are dying too. Tell us what we have done to anger you. End this drought. Save your People. Tell us what we must do so you will send rain that will bring back life."

> For three days the people danced to the sound of the drums, and for three days the people watched and waited. And even though the hard winter was over no healing rains came. Drought and famine are hardest on the very young and the very old.
>
> Soon, the leader, who was known as The Chosen One, went off alone. Stars filled the sky but there was no moon. Under the ashes of the village campfire one piece of wood still glowed. He took it quietly and crept into the night. The night was still except for the distant sound of the night bird with the red wings.
>
> He went to the top of the mountain, which was the home of the winds, to listen for the words of The Great Spirit. Then he would know what to do, and once more the rains would come and the earth would be green and alive.

In this class the emphasis was on small group work. Each group had to identify the problem, describe the situation, and decide who would be The Chosen One, what that person would learn from The Spirit, and what action had to be taken to persuade The Great Spirit to send rain. Each character was called on to explain why s/he should be chosen for the task.

Written narration, monologue, dialogue and group writing were called for. Group writing proved very difficult, evoking some resistance and anger, but Gary insisted the students see it through. The young people came to appreciate their own accomplishment when they accepted the responsibility, and they produced good pieces of writing.

Gary prefaced an attempt to elicit greater feeling by telling the students: "Use your drama work to apply to writing. When I bullied you into role, your dialogue became richer and you found solutions. You have to deal with the questions that arise in your mind, and with your feelings about the problem and the reaction of others. Now write a monologue to make a statement of how you feel about what you are trying to accomplish and how you react to the other villagers."

In the monologues, which were written in class, the students gave vent to feelings of frustration, anger, confusion, and disappointment. Feelings were honestly expressed: "Why are these people so stupid? Some of them don't make sense." "These people don't have my experience." "I'm depressed and scared if I'm not chosen."

Each group member wrote a version of the story and the group then attempted to blend these into a cohesive plot. This took considerable negotiation because many of these students found it difficult to compromise or relinquish their own ideas. The attitude of this class seemed to change at this point and the students began to work seriously. Despite their grumbling about the 'stupid story', participation was keen, and they did credit to their roles. Their ideas were innovative and the styles used tended to be satirical, mythic, or hi tech science fiction.

Most of the gifted students were highly articulate, generally wrote well, and were fairly self-possessed. There was, nevertheless, considerable improvement in the quality of their improvisations, and in their ability to work on their feet and to solve problems on their own. In the second term these students softened somewhat and became more co-operative and willing to adapt to difficult interpersonal situations.

In the past this class had needed showtime to garner approval for their work. At the end of grade 8 there was no showtime and no grand performances were demanded. The students simply read their work.

It was difficult to find the focus of this class. They seemed to be in turmoil a lot of the time and tended to come apart more than the regular classes. When interviewed, they were the only class which expressed a preference for more games, more play time. A number of them continued to resent any demand for work and complained that the pressure on them was too great.

Effect on Behaviour

By the end of grade 8 almost everyone's behaviour and self-image had been affected by the drama process. The girls became more assertive and took more active leadership roles. The boys were less self-conscious about showing their feelings. Even the angry and resistant macho students had a place where they could vent their negative feelings without being severely penalized.

The changes in behaviour seemed less dramatic than in the previous year. Observers realized that they had almost come to take them for granted. It was, nevertheless, apparent that the process which had begun in grade 7 was strengthened in the second year, and that for some students it took almost the full two years before they gained enough confidence to participate fully. Carla was a prime example. Exceptionally shy and terrified of any physical contact, particularly with boys, she refused to take part in any activity which required such contact. About halfway through grade 8 she began to relax and enjoy herself. Her participation became freer and her writing began to improve.

Teachers' Participation

Of the two grade 8 teachers, one had been with the program since its inception at Cummer Valley in 1984 and was a very active participant in the program. The other had no experience with creative drama and was heavily involved in administrative duties which frequently took her out of the classroom in the first term. She was rather uncomfortable initially, about not having more control over the language learning of her class. In the second term, she was present much of the time and was so impressed by the growth in the confidence and language skills of her students that she chose to speak about this at a school staff meeting. Both teachers reported that they made extensive use of the techniques they had learned in the drama classes in their language program.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Gary also taught drama to the Behavioural class at Cummer Valley. Because of the radical change in behaviour observed in the integrated special education students in grade 7, the researchers were curious to see how Gary would work with such a class. We felt that their response to drama - what they brought to it and what they took away - should be recorded.

The six boys and one girl exhibited behaviour typical of such classes: self hatred, lack of confidence, anger, insolence, aggression, passivity, hyperactivity and under-achievement.

From the very first, Gary treated these students with acceptance, not judgment, of their behaviour. He 'sniffed out' their abilities and encouraged them to use these in less destructive ways. He focussed and channelled their energies, and he was as demanding of them as he was of other classes.

The Gentling Process - Opening Up and Dealing with Feelings

Gary began by working with these students on their own territory, in their classroom. When they moved to the drama room their special education teacher and the classroom assistant came with them.

These students had a high level of energy which needed to be focussed. The relationship among the boys was mainly physical at first; it consisted mainly of wrestling or pushing each other. This changed as Gary worked with them on trust and relaxation exercises. Their reaction to massage was a revelation. They were very gentle and surprisingly skilled. The massage sessions frequently included all adults present. These youngsters melted when touched. We could feel their longing for positive physical contact, particularly with adults. The drama setting may well have been one of the few places where they felt it was safe to expose their vulnerability and reveal their true selves. Their teacher reported that the massage sessions led to "...an incredible opening up of these kids. They became more trusting of each other and their physical interaction was much gentler."

Gary was extremely sensitive to the students' needs and feelings. One girl, for instance, delighted in giving massage and showed unusual skill, but felt unable to accept massage for herself. Her feelings were totally respected. The therapeutic effects of professional massage therapists are well-recognized. It was especially moving, however, to observe the strong therapeutic effects of massage by these young people and to accept and reciprocate in an exchange of sensitivity and caring.

As they began to open up, Gary encouraged the students to deal with their feelings rather than to bury them or turn them against others or themselves. They were honest and funny when they talked about the things that bugged them or what they did that bugged others.

Role-playing and Improvisation

Gary used role-playing with this class as he did with the others; to deepen understanding of characterization, and help to make scenes real and effective. These students were adept at role-playing and enjoyed it very much. They became extremely involved in their characters, and it was obvious that they were thinking about what was happening. The situations and dialogue they created were believable and often very funny. Despite their reputation for lack of concentration, they were able to stay on task and carry a scene for a long period of time. Twice in the year they developed and sustained improvisations for well over a month. They enjoyed these and were reluctant to end them. The drama program seemed to give them permission to play versions of themselves which transcended the behavioural label the system imposed.

The first of the improvisations began with a complaint by Gary to Kay about the noise her children were making. She defended herself. "What do you expect when you've got 16 kids? No one else complains!" As the scenario developed, the students added many scenes in which neighbours and children were called in to support each side, the landlord was summoned, and Gary attempted to have Kay evicted. During the court hearing the students created very real situations, taking the roles of witnesses, lawyers, judge, and court reporter as needed. Though observers had seen a steady growth in confidence and considerable improvement in behaviour, we were astonished by the quality of the performances in the courtroom scene.

The plaintiff's lawyer was played by Charles, a boy whose reading skills were almost non-existent. He was very nervous and haltingly read his first speech. On the second day he extemporized, and by the end of the week he was improvising freely and effectively.

When the classroom assistant offered him a prepared script to help in his summation, he checked with Gary to see whether it would be impolite to reject it. Gary advised him to do what he thought best. He had gained enough confidence to opt for his own version, telling Gary, "I'll never get you off her way." Charles's interest in reading was stimulated by his success, and at the end of the year he voluntarily wrote a 'novel' in which he and Gary were the primary characters. (Appendix F).

James, who played the judge, sat quietly listening on the bench. When another student suggested that a real judge would have intervened more, he replied that he had watched Peoples' Court for three days to learn how judges act. This from a boy whose behaviour was frequently 'off the wall'. The court reporter, Joseph, was cajoled into participating by Gary. He was hyperactive and usually heavily medicated, making it difficult for him to sit up or pay attention. Gary insisted that he take notes, and he produced the first piece of coherent and legible writing his teacher had seen.

Kay, the harrassed mother, was the only girl in the class. She was partially deaf, rather overweight and somewhat unkempt. She had a reputation with other teachers of being domineering and insolent. Her negative attributes appear to be very much related to low self-esteem. In the drama class she was neither domineering nor insolent. On the contrary, she made marvellous contributions to all the work. She was sensitive, intelligent, and highly creative, and frequently helped to keep the other students on track.

The second of the lengthy improvisations concerned a group of youngsters who became involved in a series of robberies at the instigation of their teachers. In their development of the plot, an elderly security guard was accidentally shot during a holdup. The students worked through their actions and feelings in relation to being arrested, interrogated, held in jail, and brought to trial. There was a noticeable improvement in their confidence and in their problem-solving and negotiating skills. They had to negotiate with each other, the police, their teachers, lawyers, parents and the court. Their scenes were very real, and there was great integrity in the relationship of their characters. A scene, in which the boy responsible for the shooting visited the guard in hospital to apologize for the pain he had caused and to explain that he hadn't meant to hurt anyone, was especially touching in its sincerity.

Gary invited the Vice-principal to participate as the sentencing judge. The students were apprehensive about this. The Vice-principal played his role seriously, reviewed what had happened, explained what his options were, and pronounced sentence. The boys were found guilty and placed on parole because of their youth and because it was a first offense. The boy who had wounded the guard was sentenced to nine months of psychiatric care at the special school at Sunnybrook Hospital. The students were very involved and listened intently to the proceedings. Later they talked about how they felt and admitted to being worried and scared. They were curious about what it meant to be on parole and asked many questions, so Gary arranged for the shop teacher, a former parole officer, to explain the parole procedure. The involvement in this scenario was so great that there was tremendous resistance to any suggestion Gary made to move on to something else.

Summing Up

The change and growth observed in these students was confirmed in the interview with their special education teacher. She shared Gary's respect and caring for these students, and her presence and participation during the classes was welcomed by the students. Her perceptions support our observations and provide an effective summary of the impact of the drama program on these students:

> If it did nothing else, it gave them a sense of acceptance of themselves. They related to their peers and adults for the first time. This bond will stand them in good stead. They have something to hang onto now. They felt safe, accepted, liked and appreciated. They recognized that they could do something well. They knew in that setting that they were okay. This was a first for some of them. It was also important for the kids to read that the teacher feels this is okay.
>
> There was an absolutely incredible growth in their ability to concentrate for an extended period of time. The self-control they learned carried over into the classroom. They became a more cohesive group. At first they had little patience with each other. They were so defended, they wouldn't let anyone in. They now accept and respect each other and work out problems between themselves. They've

> become sensitive to each other's needs and they accept responsibility for each other. For example, when James couldn't stop smiling and said he wouldn't be able to stay in role, Kay told him he could do it and it helped him to carry on.
>
> They were scared at first about taking risks but that changed very quickly. Their self-image has improved and they have become incredibly honest about their feelings. When they are having a hard day they tell me, "I'm feeling lousy today."
>
> Their work habits improved with the improvement in their ability to concentrate. They were able to stay on task. There was a definite improvement in math and in their perception of how well they were doing. Kay's writing became more sensitive and brilliant. She felt needed, important, and had something to offer that other people wanted. She is very sensitive, insightful and caring.
>
> When the kids learned that James was leaving because he was being placed in another foster home, they composed their own entries for his memory book. I would have had to dictate these before. These kids have gone through something together. It had an effect on the teachers as well. It helped us to open up, relax and let down our defenses. The kids looked forward to Gary's coming and missed him when he wasn't there.
>
> There was only one student he didn't get to. No one did. He remained strained and strange.

The students were also aware of what they had gained. On the last day of class they presented Gary with a farewell card. Their messages revealed how they felt about drama and Gary:

. I will really miss our class. We had some good classes! My favourite one was the one when I was your lawyer. I will miss you and miss talking to you and reading with you. I like the massages in the class. But I hope to see you again next year. I will miss you Gary a lot.

. Thanks for all the great role playing, especially the robbery. I hope that you come back next year.

. What I like best was the role playing because it's the communicating and I am going to miss you because we have to do math.

. Thanks for all the great times in drama this year, and thanks for all the pushes in those troubled times. They will really help me in the years to come. These past two years I've learned a lot of skills that I can use in everyday life. Plus I really learned how to work in groups with people I didn't like.

. Thank you for the great time in drama. I like it a lot and it was fun too.

. Thank you for all the drama you gave me and for helping me with my feelings. When we did the massages you did it so good to me that you loosened me up for baseball this summer. I will really miss you.

. I hope the future holds a great opportunity for you to show off your dramatic talents! I am glad you came to our school and I hope that you will remember our school and think about how we started out in September and laugh!

THE STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVE

GRADE 7

The students were interviewed in small groups in the week following the end of the program in June 1986. They talked freely about their experiences in the course and were refreshingly candid about what they did or did not like.

Reactions to the Creative Drama Program

Role-playing, Improvisations and Tableaux

The students, without exception, liked the role-playing and improvisations best. They also enjoyed creating tableaux. The freedom and challenge of building their own scripts, tapping their creativity and imagination, and choosing their own topics were exciting and empowering.

- I really liked role-playing. It was fun. You don't have a script to work with. You just build yourself into the character and think what the character is going to think. It's spontaneous. I liked the challenge to do something creative like having to build a fountain in 15 minutes then have to decide what to do because the king kept changing his mind.
- I liked the feeling of stillness in the tableaux.
- I learned different ways to say things or just be quiet.

They enjoyed acting. The youngsters liked the power it gave them and the confidence they gained from it.

- Acting gives you power, a chance to do something well even if you're not as good as others in other things.
- I got a chance to play an enjoyable and different role. I liked playing a drunk.
- Your class is an audience; you made up the lines and did them.

There was a greater understanding of how to structure effective scenes, how to use dialogue, monologue, and narration, and how to develop characterizations. Students enjoyed the sense of 'knowing' a character and felt this contributed to a better understanding of the feelings and behaviour of others. They felt, as well, that the skills they acquired in drama had improved their writing skills.

- King's Fountain was really exciting. Everyone was into it, including the teacher. There was no discussion. We just had to get in groups. Gary treated us the way teachers usually do, and all of us wanted to kill him. Then we got a sense of what our parents must feel about us a lot of the time.
- I learned a great deal, and particularly liked the exercise in which we were stuck to somebody for the rest of our lives and had to describe how we managed it, what we did, how it felt.
- It helped us write better. Our writing is more alive and more descriptive now.

Many of the students liked the sense of not knowing what was going to happen next and saw it as part of the fun. They felt that it had taught them to act and react quickly, and had helped them to listen to others. On the other hand, a few students did not like the uncertainty and would have preferred more direction.

Almost all of the students considered that the time spent on the final improvisation was worthwhile as it gave them a chance to develop their scenes more fully. There were a few, however, who wanted a greater variety of activities. These students said that they did not like script writing or working on anything for a long time.

Games

Most games were enjoyed, particularly those which challenged, allowed more freedom or social interaction, and required co-operation. King's Keys was the most popular game because it was filled with suspense, required the use of strategy, and was good fun. Other favourites were Atom, Frozen Tag, The Newspaper Game, and quiet games like tiptoeing across the room.

The only game generally disliked was Red Light/Green Light. Though its use in learning to move silently was understood, many students felt it was not appropriate for their age group. Several of the gifted students were put off initially because they thought playing games was too childish, but admitted that they had come to enjoy the release that games provided.

Storytelling

Questions on storytelling elicited a mixed reaction. Despite our observation of keen enjoyment when they were read to, a number of students indicated that they preferred to be involved in the telling:

. I preferred the stories we told ourselves.

. I liked completing a sentence by adding description.

. I didn't like being read to. I found it boring.

. Lots of things changed me; this didn't.

Physical Movement and Interpersonal Exercises

There was little reference to either the physical movement or interpersonal exercises though there was tacit acknowledgement of their effectiveness in some of the general statements made.

. I had mixed feelings about the Blind Walk at first, but I really enjoyed it because it made you think about what you would do or feel if this happened to you. I like doing things which can be applied to my life.

. I got to know people better and it helped me to work with them.

. The classes got us to mix more.

. It taught us to know our own feelings through drama.

. It energized us. When we came out of drama we were noisy. The teacher in next class always asked whether we had come from drama.

The Voice of Dissidents

For most of the students the course was exciting and fun much of the time, and this was conveyed in what they said about the enjoyment and value they derived from the course in terms of personal growth and improved writing skills. Some disenchantment set in for the small number of students who did not like to write scripts, felt a strong need for more specific direction, or who disliked some particular aspect of the program.

. Gary kept pushing us to change the script. It's easier to act out than write it. When you write it's harder to change. You have to convince other members of your group that it's worth doing.

- We never had enough time. We kept moving from one thing to another and didn't get a chance to see anything develop.
- I prefer being told what to do.
- I prefer to deal with problems which are emotionally detached from me.
- I thought the course would be more fun and freer. We have to be serious in all our other classes.

Classroom Teacher Involvement

The students loved having the teachers participate. It gave the teachers a more human face and gained respect from the students.

- We liked having our teacher participate. We worked better in class. I wish she had done more. It's changed her way of teaching. She lets us talk more. We now have discussions at the beginning of class about how we feel about topics. She encourages us to use the techniques we've learned in drama in writing.
- It was great having him take part. He was just like a kid with us and makes you see he knows what you feel.
- I liked having her there - when she was silly, we could be silly.
- Our teacher used some of the drama techniques in social studies and for oral book reports. I found it more interesting.

Reaction to Drama Teacher

There was no doubt, whatever their individual complaints, they liked him. He was different from other teachers.

- He was informal. He dressed casually like us. We could call him by his first name.
- He was open and showed us his feelings. He joked a lot, and was fun. He also smiled a lot which made us feel comfortable.
- He treated us as equals. This made me feel closer to him.
- He was always on the same level with us. He let us know he was no better than us. It was nice to go up to him and muck up his hair. You can't do that with other teachers.
- He encouraged us and let us be our own person. He let us do things our own way which is unusual in school.
- He was relaxed and understood our feelings and he identified with us.
- He extended us and pushed us hard but we didn't mind. It was fun and learning at the same time.

. He argued with us a lot, challenged us and we argued back. It was fun talking back to a teacher. We rarely get a chance to do that.

. I liked it when he was angry with us. It frightened us because we didn't know what was going to happen. We would be talking and not listening at first and we needed to be pulled back.

. He had a contagious way of sharing an idea which made us sit up and take notice. He was an okay guy.

. He scared us at first. He said we shouldn't do things because other people want us to and got mad at us when we tried to give 'right' or easy answers. He wanted to know why we did or thought something. At first it made me more careful about answering, then I realized it was okay. He wanted me to think for myself.

But it wasn't all sweetness and light. There was some talk of insensitivity to hurt feelings and favouritism.

. Sometimes he pushed too hard, yelled at us and didn't pay attention to our feelings.

. He hurt our feelings and then expected us to snap out of it right away.

. He had his favourites. He paid too much attention to the special education kids.

Changes Students Saw in Themselves and Others

It was easier for the students to observe changes in other people's behaviour than in their own. They were, nevertheless, aware of changes in themselves. Most of the students felt that they had become more confident, open, mature and involved; that they were less shy and understood themselves better; that they had greater respect for what others were feeling; and that they were no longer afraid to speak in front of an audience, or to say what they really think. One student found the drama classes had renewed her desire to paint.

The students were surprised at the changes they observed in other members of their class.

. People you never thought would do anything did a lot more work.

. Everyone opened up and was less shy.

The difference in the behaviour and participation of a number of the special education students was particularly noticed. The group was amazed and delighted that the girl who was withdrawn and silent risked speaking for the first time in the drama class. They were aware of the sad-faced twins who began to smile, laugh, and take a more active part in the improvisations. They also noted the growing involvement in the drama activities and the contribution made by the special education students to the improvisations at the end of the year.

There was amazement at the sudden and rather dramatic change in the behaviour of Jack and Elijah who began to work co-operatively with other students.

Among the gifted students the most notable alteration in behaviour and participation was observed in boys. For example:

. Edward, who "was obnoxious, refused to answer and always held back, is still obnoxious but he's really open now. Gary worked on him a lot. He teased him and talked to him after class and he's totally different now."

. Fred who "never shared any ideas and never showed any feeling" became more open and began to take part more.

. Peter, who usually chose to listen and watch and dealt with everything "in his head," opened up and talked more freely about feelings.

GRADE 8

The grade 8 students were interviewed in small groups early in June 1987. These students were more ambivalent than the 7's, though their responses were equally honest. We were told by the staff that negative feelings were quite strong among the grade 8's at this time of year as the students were ready to leave and move on to high school. It was not easy to keep the students on topic. Given a chance, some students would have turned the interviews into a general bitching session about school and teachers. Despite this, the students' assessment of the value of the creative drama program was positive.

Because the exposure of the gifted class to the program was shorter and different from that of the regular classes in grade 8, their responses are reported separately (pages 64-66).

Regular Classes

Though they were somewhat more critical, much of what the grade 8 students told us repeated and confirmed what they had said the previous year. They saw Gary as a demanding but fair taskmaster who respected them and encouraged them to use their abilities. They still liked his informality and appreciated being able to call him by his first name. Some, especially among the boys, felt that he was a friend they could trust.

Learning and Enjoying

The students still saw creative drama as providing opportunities for learning and fun which were different from most other school experiences.

. We didn't want boundaries. We can stretch in drama. We can't do it elsewhere.

. I liked the idea that we could put something together on our own without having a teacher looking over our shoulder.

. I really liked being able to create our own stuff.

. Drama was educating. We learned a lot from it; how to work with people and self control.

. I liked drama. It was more fun than other classes.

Going Deeper

The deepening process was enjoyed and appreciated.

. It was more challenging and I learned more this year. I liked having more continuity, more role-playing and the longer improvisations.

. I liked it better than last year because we were doing different things. I got more out of the work than last year. I liked the variety and the improvisations. I can talk in front of the whole class more freely.

. I liked role-playing and improvisations and doing different things and then putting them all together.

. The second year wasn't really new stuff but he taught it in a different way - deeper. I liked having less time for warmups.

. I really liked taking over the island and when he kept adding new stuff, like when the children were taken away.

. Having to do narration really helped.

Writing

There were few responses to questions concerning their reaction to being asked to write more this year, though they tended to be fairly positive.

. Writing actually helped, particularly when we did the monologues.

. I was able to use some of the ideas from drama when we were working on foreshadowing in Cue for Treason.

. The writing was helpful in getting me to put down what I feel, especially the monologues. I try to write songs and it helped me express my feelings better.

Personal Growth

It was not surprising that the greatest number of comments concerned personal growth as this is one of the most important aspects of a young adolescent's life. The students were eager to talk about their greater sense of self confidence, the opening up of feelings which left them more sensitive to others' needs as well as their own, what they learned about working in groups, the encouragement to take risks, and their reactions to Gary's demands.

. Everybody's self confidence increased. Gary brought out people who didn't say anything and it showed everybody else that they could do well. It's also why we got so much done when those people went to Quebec and we had a smaller class and he was able to open everybody else up. Violet wasn't so scared in a smaller class. She used to get bothered by others and I felt upset about it but I helped her last year. She was more definite this year. When Gary asked her to read she said, "No."

. Gary was good at giving everyone in the class a chance to perform so they gained confidence.

. Drama at least got everybody to try. The shy kids just needed encouragement from the group. Co-operation made it work, and listening to each other. People who usually don't work tried.

. We got instant feedback and that feels good.

. I had a lot more confidence about getting up in front of the class and I could think more quickly on my feet. I was even able to perform for Open House.

. There was a lot of change in people but it wasn't so noticeable this year because we saw it last year.

. Gary really opened us up. Drama helped me to express my feelings better with my friends. I got practice here. It helped me a lot because I'm really sensitive and I get hurt easily.

. I'm not so scared about showing my feelings and I'm not so embarrassed when other people perform.

> . Gary knows what he's doing. He pushes you because he knows you can do it so he wants you to try harder.
>
> . Group dynamics are difficult. It got easier to work with people. We listened to each other more. We worked together and got to know each other more. I learned more about working in groups. We learned we can work with people we don't know.
>
> . It got easier for boys and girls to work together though I found it difficult when I was the only girl with a group of boys who knew each other. They acted as if I wasn't there.

Meeting Gary's Expectations

There were some grumblings about being pushed too hard but the general feeling was expressed in a rather nice little exchange between two students. When one of them complained that Gary pushed too hard and expected too much, Marlene, who had expressed an intense dislike for Gary in grade 7, came to his defense and probably reflected what a lot of students were feeling about being expected to work to the best of their ability.

> . He had different and new ideas and he did push us too hard and expected a high standard of work all the time. We can't always do it. You know I didn't like him last year, but this year I feel different. I like being pushed. I need to be pushed to do things. The challenge was good if you were in a good mood, but if he pushed too hard he turned me off.

Teacher Particpation

The active participation of teachers was still important in breaking through barriers and allowing the students to see the human face of their teachers.

> . I liked it when the teacher participated. She wasn't like a teacher. We were laughing with her and at her. Most teachers don't really care. Our teacher took part. I liked that because it encouraged us.
>
> . I really liked it when the teacher got involved. My mom thought it was great that the teacher took part in Open House. My mom wanted to see what was happening and why I liked drama so much. She understands better now.
>
> . I think it would have been better if the teacher had participated more. We saw something different when she did. We saw the fun part of her. We saw her as a person.

You Don't Win Them All

Gary didn't reach everyone. There were general grumblings about being pushed too hard and about Gary being less sensitive to their needs than in grade 7. The strongest criticism came from a few boys who didn't like school or were unsuccessful there. Though they projected a tough image, we sensed a tremendous insecurity in them. They wanted more certainty in what they were doing and preferred more structured work. They complained that Gary expected too much of them; there was no way they would acknowledge that they derived any benefit from drama or anything else the school had to offer.

> . We're the oldest in the school and this influenced the way we behave. We don't take as much and we don't let anyone push us around. We don't really care about what teachers think of us or whether we get into trouble. All the teachers look at is their point of view. We know what we can't do.
>
> . Drama is supposed to be more fun. There are no marks. Why should we have to produce anything like a monologue to get into a class? We do homework only because we are marked for it.

There were also several students who still felt that drama should be primarily concerned with the production of plays.

The Gifted Class

Slightly more than half of this class was present for the interviews. Typically, a number of the members of this class were involved in other activities at the time.

The Deepening Process

The gifted students recognized and appreciated the deepening process but felt the course was too serious this year; they would have preferred more playing time.

> . We worked harder this year. I appreciated its value, but I would have preferred more games and more fun. It was too serious. We were looked at as too mature to play games. Games weren't childish, they were challenging.
>
> . I liked the first half of the year and last year better. There was more variety and it was more fun. It was stimulating to get into role and be creative. It was too serious this year.

What They Did and Didn't Like

The gifted class obtained the greatest enjoyment and appreciation from the telling of stories gathered from their families and from the problem-solving exercise about the community where reading was banned. Several students complained about the spirit story because they didn't like having so much of the plot "laid on".

. I really liked the grandparent stories. At first my grandparents would say that they didn't have an interesting childhood and then they would begin to remember and tell lots of stories.

. I loved the reading story but I didn't like the spirit story. It was hard to work with people you don't get along with.

. When I don't like something, it's hard for me to work on it. Too much of the plot was laid on in the spirit story.

Group Dynamics

The group dynamics were well established in this class. These students had been together for so long that they were very definite about whom they would, or would not, work with and they admitted to little compromise. In actuality they made many adjustments, especially in the second term.

. I like being the boss of everything and so does D. I didn't learn anything about working with people, I didn't want to and I just refused to do it.

. I feel more creative when I work with people I like.

. You always have to be mature and compromise when you work with people you don't see eye to eye with and sometimes it stops the working of creative ideas. Sometimes you just don't have the energy to stand up for your ideas and you just go along with what others have said.

Writing

For this class, writing was a mixed blessing. Some liked it, some did not.

. I liked writing. It helped the drama a lot. I find it very hard to show myself just off the bat, but when I'm writing it seems to help me.

. It was good to write it down so you don't forget your ideas.

. Drama gave us guideliness so it helped. I can write a script now. I was always good at writing stories anyway but it really helped me with character writing. I went deeper. It starts in drama; it starts in my mind.

. I prefer to have control over what I do. It makes it just like any other class when we have to write.

. I prefer writing with just an idea, not a specific story. I prefer more freedom. We got enough of writing in English class. Drama is educational but it also is a little bit of a break from what we do in other classes.

. I didn't like the group writing. It was much harder because it was hard to change other people's work.

Meeting Gary's Expectations

Some liked being pushed, others resented it. Some of their comments were indicative of the general sense of resentment and 'unsettledness' which was rampant in this class throughout the year.

- Gary worked us harder. I liked it, being pushed hard. At the moment I was really mad at him but when I look back it makes me feel good about what I did.
- He pushed me and I found that good because otherwise I'd never reach my potential.
- Look, this is our last year. We just want to have fun. Last year we had fun but we still did a lot of productive work. It was no fun this year.
- Gary was more serious this year. He didn't seem as nice. He criticized us a lot. He compared us to last year and to the grade 6s. This turned us off. It doesn't make you want to get better. It just makes you angry.

The response to our question about whether they accepted any responsibility for their own behaviour at the beginning of the year when all their teachers were complaining about them and the Vice Principal found it necessary to intervene, was interesting, and may reflect what happens to any segregated group.

- That was unfair. We have enough trouble trying to get our label out of the way with our peers in our other classes. When teachers start doing it it really makes it harder.

Personal Growth

In contrast to the regular grade 8 classes, there was almost no reaction to questions related to personal growth, though they noted that one of their classmates, who had been having a great deal of personal difficulty, had benefited greatly.

TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVE

GRADE 7

The interviews conducted in December 1985 with the grade 7 teachers, in conjunction with the informal discussions which took place throughout the year between the observer and the classroom and special education teachers, confirmed what had been observed in the creative drama classes. The teachers talked about their perception of the program, the effect it had on their students, and how they had integrated drama with their own programs.

Drama Background of Teachers

Because of the change in structure from a junior high to a middle school, three of the four grade 7 teachers were new to the school. Only one, therefore, was familiar with the creative drama program. Among the new teachers, two had transferred from other junior highs, and one from an elementary school. One was keenly interested in drama and held a drama specialist's certificate. The other two had no experience in teaching drama and, at the beginning of the year, shared the students' perception that drama was confined to the production of plays.

Though only three of the four grade 7 classes were involved in our study, we interviewed all four teachers as all the grade 7 classes took drama with Gary. Three of them saw creative drama as an integral part of their curriculum. The fourth, while always interested and co-operative, felt it had impinged on the time available for the rest of his program.

Effect on Students' Behaviour

Gary's understanding of, and ability to work well with, this age group were seen as having a decided impact on the students' social growth, and positive changes in student behaviour were reported in a number of areas.

Self Esteem

There was decided improvement in self-esteem and self-assurance for most students, especially for those from different cultures and for the learning disabled who were integrated in the drama program. The teachers stated that:

- Many students have an identity problem at this stage of their lives and the group activity was very helpful.
- There was lots of reinforcement for positive behaviour. Kids liked getting praise and having someone else listen to their ideas.

- The ESL students became more confident as they were forced to interact with other students and began to feel more comfortable in other subjects as well.
- Several boys who were very insecure gained self-assurance and began to welcome a chance to speak and make presentations.

Social Interaction

The supportive atmosphere provided in the drama classes helped students learn about human relations. Teachers reported that their students became more co-operative, more prepared to resolve problems on their own, more open and willing to take risks, and more accepting of differences.

- As personality conflicts which arose in drama were resolved there, a greater cohesiveness and co-operation developed when the students worked in groups.
- Those who were gregarious became more positive in their expression of this aspect of themselves. The shy came out of themselves because they were forced to work in groups; some really blossomed.
- There were discussions on factionalism which helped the students understand and accept differences.
- Drama provided an opportunity for success for kids with problems in social interaction.

The drama classes helped in the integration of new students and of students with learning disabilities; and brought to light the leadership potential of quiet students.

- The change in several of the reclusive special education girls was really noticeable, particularly in one who never spoke and began to speak, at first only in Gary's class, and then in her other classes.
- It helped with the integration of new students.
- There was better acceptance of the learning disabled students.
- The drama classes also helped me to identify quiet kids who have leadership potential.

Change was particularly noted by the teacher of the gifted class. She had been somewhat disconcerted early in the year because, "Whenever I talked to my students I had the feeling that I was dealing with parents." The drama classes helped her students become more open and willing to talk to her about their problems.

Several parents had commented to teachers about change they had observed in their children. One boy who hated school and had always found it difficult to sit through a lesson told his parents that he loved the drama classes. They felt he had blossomed there and were impressed by the improvement in his ability to concentrate.

The father of another child, a rather small, frail boy with learning disabilities who was somewhat of a social outcast, believed that the acceptance his son experienced in the group work had increased the boy's confidence and that he was now much happier in school.

The special education teacher attributed the positive change which occurred in her students to their acceptance and inclusion in all of the activities of the drama classes. She noted that, as a group, the girls seemed to respond most favourably.

Discipline and Self-Control

Games played in drama contributed to increased self discipline, control and co-operation.

- Students not only want to do well themselves, but they are beginning to want other people to succeed too.

One teacher, who had a particularly difficult class with a wide range of abilities, found that drama helped her class "to settle down."

- They had a chance to let off steam through the physical activity and found the problems they were given to solve very interesting. It seemed to calm down some jumpy kids.

Sense of Responsibility

Though they were not specific about how this was manifested, the teachers suggested that the the emphasis on group work had contributed to gro[illegible] in the students' sense of responsibility.

- If you crossed the boundaries of acceptable behaviour you found you were no longer part of the community and had to face the consequences within your group.

Willingness to Explore Ideas and Take Risks

As students became more confident and experienced in taking risks, there was greater willingness to try new things and to find solutions to problems on their own.

- Many students were timid at first, but became more confident about taking risks as they were given lots of leeway to do so.
- There was real improvement in making decisions for themselves, not just asking what the teacher wants.
- They became much better in problem-solving.

Effect on Students' Work Habits, Concentration, Listening and Language Skills, and Creativity

Concentration and Listening Skills

Many students had difficulty with concentration and listening skills at the beginning of the year, and teachers sensed that the drama classes had been of considerable help in enhancing these skills.

- It focussed talk and channelled energies.
- It encouraged children with listening problems to make a special effort, resulting in much improvement.

Work Habits

A greater absorption in assigned tasks was noted.

- This was particularly true in writing. The kids get into it faster.
- The students seem able to focus better and get things done in a shorter period of time.
- My learning disabled students have much more perseverance for working through activities, though this may only be a short-term benefit.

Oral and Written Language

There was a marked improvement in language skills, especially in writing.

- It certainly helped kids to write. They were much keener to do so.
- There was greater use of imagination and greater interest in using different words. It is a better way to write.
- The students loved role-playing. It helped them to write scripts and monologues easily because they have already had the experience of doing it orally.

. It taught them much about how to structure writing and meant I didn't have to explain how to do it.

. They have become more interested in using and experimenting with new words and more descriptive language.

. It is particularly good for language because it elicits emotional responses and provides a stimulus for writing.

. Quiet kids who had difficulty with concrete aspects of writing bring more detail to writing.

. The gifted kids were very analytical in their writing at the beginning of the year. Their work became more feeling and imaginative. They have always been interested in writing but now bring drama into their assignments.

Creativity

There was a shared feeling that the creative process was reawakened and heightened for many of the students.

. I believe there is a lot of opportunity for creativity in the early grades but then it is cut off. It is nice to see it revived.

. The kids have to work out solutions to problems they have never met before. This helps spark creative thinking.

. They have become more imaginative and much better at problem-solving and risk-taking.

. It has developed their imagination.

. The writing they did in the storytelling section of their improvisations was terrific.

Use of Drama Techniques in the Classroom

All of the teachers had employed some of the drama techniques, particularly in language arts and social studies. Role-playing was most frequently used because it was enjoyed by the students and helped them to gain a greater understanding of the subject studied.

. Through role-playing the kids began to see things in less of a black and white framework, particularly in history.

. We read a novel of a relationship between a native and an English boy in history and I used role-playing to help students understand the social forces and feelings involved.

. We used role-playing and tableaux for history. The kids also wrote conversations with, or letters to, prominent people in Canadian history.

- I have been using similar techniques but through Gary's work I became more sensitive to the characteristics of this age group and how to adapt drama to their energy level and integrate it in the curriculum.
- It was useful for problem-solving and for group work to complement what Gary was doing.

Reaction to Creative Drama and Gary

Slightly different views were held by individual teachers although all agreed on the intrinsic value of the program and the effectiveness of the teacher/catalyst.

- I had no concept of what Gary would do. I'm learning how to cope with this age group and it is a lifesaver to have someone else do the drama. I feel more comfortable now. Drama allows for give and take. I was learning and able to get involved with the kids. I feel more comfortable with them. I know what they have done and what can be done, and feel more comfortable about taking over myself.
- Working with Gary is a professional development experience. He is a talented actor and provides flexible, dynamic input. He draws on the concrete experience of the kids and is very flexible and willing to work with teachers.
- I feel it was most helpful at the beginning of the year in terms of kids learning co-operation. Group dynamics is a good starting up tool. But I'm concerned with the loss of program time and loss of contact with my class. I also have some concerns about having them write scripts of improvisations. Perhaps it should have been left non-print, as a physical and verbal experience. My gut feeling is that the writing took away some of the positive feeling about the program.
- I definitely want it to continue. I like the idea of a block of time. Drama is something all kids can succeed at; it is really important. I would like to see it integrated into every school. Gary is a terrific person and the kids are eager to please him. He also is always in touch with what I want to do.

Professional Development

Ongoing professional development would be welcomed by the teachers.

- One-day P.D. courses are not sufficient. There needs to be on-the-job training. Teaching is an apprenticeship system.
- Somebody like Gary should be part of the middle school program. It's important to have someone who is an actor because his energy is focussed and he still has time to devote to his own growth in acting and directing which is beneficial to his teaching. Gary is particularly talented in working with this age group, but others can be trained to do it as well.

GRADE 8

The two Grade 8 teachers and the Special Education teacher were interviewed early in June 1987. All were experienced grade 8 teachers. One of the regular class teachers had been involved in the Creative Drama from its inception at Cummer Valley in 1984, and she frequently took part in the classes. The other was new to the program and taught the gifted class as well. The Special Education teacher had worked with Gary in the previous year. Her interview is reported in detail in the section on Special Education.

The teachers were excited about the results. They saw the drama program as an affirmation of the philosophy of active learning which is central to the middle school curriculum. They strongly supported everything teachers had reported in grade 7 regarding exceptional growth in language skills, creativity, concentration and listening skills, work habits, willingness to take risks, responsibility, self-confidence and self-control, and they added new insights, especially about growth in language skills.

The message was clear. There was no doubt in their minds that the growth they had seen in their students was unusual. They felt that the students had taken drama seriously knowing that, "Gary would not let them off the hook" and that it had been "... a wonderful experience. The kids really enjoyed it. It was energizing and there was lots of learning."

Oral and Written Language

Language was seen as the major area of academic growth.

. Kids this age usually dislike oral reading. I was surprised when they volunteered to read and role-play in oral reading.

. They loved storytelling, and I began to use some of Gary's techniques in class, such as starting a story and letting the kids finish it.

. Their understanding of literature increased. When they were studying Cue for Treason they would discuss points of tension, conflict, etc. as a carryover from drama.

. There is a much greater ease in writing. Their writing flows in a natural way. They understand the structure of a plot. Gary stressed realistic behaviour and dialogue so I didn't have to repeat that.

- Their writing is much more imaginative.
- One of my classes developed an incredible interest in writing. They were very excited and wanted to keep writing. They wrote unassigned stories at home and brought their work in for me to critique and give advice. Lots of kids came to me with writing they'd done at home. These are not the best writers. I have never seen anything like this before. It's more usual for them to be blase and complain about writing.
- I was frustrated for awhile because I like to work on a theme and like to fit things together. In the long run, kids ended up in the right place and gained more in drama in terms of ease and skill in writing, and their oral work is much better. They can think on their feet and can develop and explain ideas well. Their enthusiasm for drama was transferred to their writing.

Work Habits

The teachers confirmed our observations about the change in work habits.

- The weaker students became more tenacious. All the kids really worked hard on the last asssignment. They stuck to it and finished the work. There was a definite improvement in group work. When they worked in groups, they didn't let each other off the hook.
- The kids are able to stay on topic more and develop it better, and they prefer to choose their own groups and work on their own ideas.
- There is a greater willingness to ask me for help to check out ideas and the progress of their writing.

Creativity

The creativity which had been unleashed in drama was carried over into the classroom.

- We were studying the influence of advertising. The kids wrote and dramatized ads. One group composed a jingle for a weight loss clinic called 'Weight No More'. Another group was pushing 'Soft Touch - the toilet paper that does everything'. They brought the funniest props - a toilet seat, lights, a radio, and even a small TV set. The kids also held a fashion show featuring outfits made of different coloured garbage bags. Their commentaries were absolutely delightful and I was amazed at their confidence. Their creativity and sense of fun were wonderful.

Effect on Students

There was a sense that almost everyone had changed in some way. The increase in self-confidence and self-control among the shy and withdrawn, and the improvement in self-control among students with behaviour problems was particularly noticeable. The teachers felt these youngsters had really blossomed.

- One girl, who is usually a pain and resists working, wrote a fine essay on a novel we read in class. I was also pleasantly surprised because she used to be embarrassed in drama but she was quite at ease when we did the fashion show in class.

- Jim's confidence in himself grew so much that he was willing to perform on the night of Open House when there was a Creative Drama demonstration. His parents told me that after seeing how the kids improvised that night they could understand and appreciate how drama had helped their son.

- Violet [the shy, silent Special Education student] - I couldn't believe that she sat there for two periods, writing, correcting, in total concentration, and produced such a wonderful piece of work. She had never written anything for me before.

- Kay [from the behavioural class], who I had trouble with all year is much more mature. Near the end of the year I sent her to the Vice Principal's office because of her interfering behaviour. She wrote me a note apologizing and asked me not to make her go because she would miss more class time.

The teachers felt that the change they had observed would be lasting for most of the students.

- It can't help but be. They've really learned skills and once they've experienced such openness and trust, you can't shut it down.

SUMMARY

The techniques Gary employed in the creative drama classes were part of a process, and it was obvious that a planned progression in building skills and changing attitudes was involved. In the first year Gary laid the foundation, concentrating on opening up the students emotionally and physically and teaching techniques of role-playing, tableaux and improvisation. In the second year he took the students deeper into the process and stressed writing skills.

Gary had frequent discussions with the classroom teachers to ensure that his curriculum goals were the same as theirs and that they met the needs of their students, and he adapted his program as needed. Decisions were made in conjunction with the teachers about which students needed special attention, when writing was appropriate, and whether it should be done in the drama room, in the classroom, or as a homework assignment.

The tone of Gary's classes, while always friendly and relaxed, was task oriented. There were clear goals for each class and the students were frequently reminded of these. The atmosphere was firm but non-punitive. Critical comments were usually task-related and were intended to help the work progress and to create a better understanding of feelings and attitudes.

Much of what Gary did reflects good classroom management: he helped students pay attention, concentrate, and stay on task. Drama has the advantage of doing this in an active rather than a passive way, with students not always consciously aware of the skills being taught.

From our observations and from the improvement in the quality of the students' writing, we believe that the goals of the creative drama program, to enhance student self-discipline and maturation and to produce improvement in language, particularly in creative writing, were successfully achieved. As we observed classes over the two years we could see a pattern of growth in language skills and maturation in behaviour, sometimes within a single period. There was extraordinary growth in language which constantly grew richer in detail and vividness of description. Extensive practice in role-playing and improvisation heightened the students' understanding of character development. The students really liked role-playing and felt that 'knowing a character' gave them a better understanding of the feelings and behaviour of others. They enjoyed the challenge and spontaneity of improvisation and loved the power they had while creating their own material. They gained a better understanding of the need for coherent structure, and their writing bears witness to this (see Appendices C-F).

Within each 50-minute class, with few exceptions, there was an increase in the students' attention and concentration, greater self-control, less self-consciousness, a greater sense of their physicality, more willingnesss to take risks either in exposing their ideas or in performing, greater co-operation within groups and, along with the serious learning that was taking place, a sense of fun and playfulness. The students found it easier to work out problems without help from the teacher, and they grew more persistent in facing and resolving problems. Their social interaction improved greatly as they learned to work with different people and to pay attention to what was happening to others as well as to themselves. They became more open and less inhibited about expressing feelings. They were more animated, quicker to focus on their work, and more intense and self-directed in what they were doing; their imagination and creativity were given free play. Despite the occasional protest at being pushed too hard, they delighted in the challenge. Their involvement was so great that classes frequently entered the drama room and began to work without direction from the teacher. There was always an undercurrent of excitement. Students were rarely silent, unless silence was employed to heighten self-control. The students seemed captivated by both the process and the drama teacher much of the time.

Maturation in behaviour was increasingly apparent. Some of it stemmed from the relationship of the teacher to the students. They appreciated his attitude toward them - one of openness, understanding, and respect. He encouraged students to exert independence of thought and action and to resolve problems through discussion and co-operation, and he had faith in their ability to do so. The students also enjoyed his informality, especially being allowed to address him by his first name. The boys frequently clustered around him, and there was a lot of physical byplay with them before and after class. A number of the more introverted boys seemed to blossom through this contact. In grade 8, Gary held an extra class in stage fighting during the lunch period. There was a noticeable increase in self-confidence among the small group of boys who attended regularly.

There was more physical constraint in his relationship with the girls, though they, too, on occasion, surrounded him. The girls in the special education programs were particularly eager for contact and recognition.

A qualitative change in group behaviour and social interaction took place and was reflected in a greater willingness to work in different groups. Boys and girls worked together more comfortably, though not always by choice.

Gary was also frequently greeted with delight in the hallway, and students in other grades often came to the door of the drama room between periods to plead for more drama classes.

In general, change in the girls was more subtle than in the boys. The male stereotype encourages boys to express energy and excitement in physical movement while girls are more inhibited about this kind of physical expression. Nevertheless, the girls became more physical, more assertive, and less willing to accept passive roles. With encouragement from Gary, they chose active and less stereotypical roles, playing, for example, pilots, platoon leaders, and doctors in war scenes. In grade 8, they more frequently assumed leadership roles. Behavioural change among the boys was usually manifested either in a greater willingness to participate or in more openness about what they were feeling.

The extent of change in behaviour observed in grade 7 was confirmed during the student interviews. While students had difficulty seeing any change in themselves, they recognized and discussed in considerable detail the changes they saw in their classmates. At the end of grade 8, the general perception was that the program had affected almost everyone by opening up feelings and fostering greater acceptance and understanding of each other.

There was a profound change in the ESL and special education students who were integrated in the drama program, and the effect on the behaviour and oral and writing skills of the special class of behavioural students was extraordinary. The behavioural students had a sense for the first time that they were worthwhile, that school was a place where they belonged. A group support system developed in their drama classes, and they learned the essential life skills of self-acceptance and how to get along with others. Role-playing and improvisation taught them to solve problems without resorting to physical or verbal violence. The non-readers began to see a reason for reading.

The effects of the program were obvious by the end of grade 7 for many of the students. Some, however, required the two-year period to develop confidence in their own ability and to bolster their language skills. In grade 8, the most impressive growth in language and confidence occurred among students whose language skills were weak. There was strong confirmation from the teachers about the effect of the drama program on their students. The students learned to think on their feet and to draw from their own experience and imagination. They became more adaptable and flexible, and most learned to work well in short time frames. Both divergent and convergent thinking were stimulated. Teachers reported improvement in self-esteem, confidence, social interaction, creativity, willingness to explore new ideas and take risks, problem-solving, concentration and listening skills, and work habits. They were surprised by the quality and quantity of growth in language skills and saw a carryover into their classrooms, particularly in terms of the confidence gained and the creativity unleashed. They shared a feeling that creative drama should be part of the regular curriculum and expressed interest in professional development in drama for themselves. All had used some of the techniques in their classes.

A ripple effect was felt by the teachers, especially those who participated actively in the classes. They, too, became more open and creative, and the relationship with their students changed as the students began to see them as 'real' people.

If, as the literature suggests, the function of creative drama is to free the creative spirit in children by helping them explore different ways of dealing with life situations, then this program can be judged to be successful.

PART III - FINDINGS: COMPARATIVE MEASURES

CREATIVE WRITING

One of the major goals of the Creative Drama program was to improve writing skills. Along with our observation of the drama classes we felt it important to collect comparative data from classes in schools with similar socioeconomic backgrounds. The results obtained on the creative writing exercises administered to both the experimental and comparison groups are reported in this section.

Grade 7

Description of Writing Exercises

All classes wrote the first of the prescribed creative writing exercises at the beginning of October 1985. Two plates taken from The Mysteries of Harris Burdick by Chris Van Allsburg served as the stimuli. Each picture was assigned to half the students in each class (see Appendix A). In December 1985, immediately after the completion of the first segment of the creative drama program, students wrote the second exercise. The same stimuli were used as in October and students were asked to write about the picture they had not used earlier. Thirty minutes were allowed for writing the rough draft and twenty minutes for making a final copy.

The third exercise was written at the end of May 1986. Students were permitted to either choose their own topic or use the following beginning sentences: "This morning was different. When I looked into the mirror...." The students were given a day's advance notice and a full period each for the writing of the draft and the good copy. We wished to see whether better and more creative writing would result when students were given freedom to choose the topic, time to think about what they wanted to say, and more time to write in class.

Marking Scheme and Training of Markers

All papers were marked by supply teachers who were experienced in teaching this grade on four criteria: the intent of the writer, content, audience awareness and stylistic concerns. It was developed by Curriculum and Staff Development Services of the North York Board of Education and is described in A Marked Improvement (1983).

A primary assumption of this approach is that markers will internalize these criteria and automatically include them in the marking process as they gain experience in using this method. The major portion of the training session was, therefore, devoted to practice in marking, to discussion of how each marker determined the grade she assigned, and to the consensual process by which final marks were assigned.

The following five point rating scale was employed:

5 - excellent
4 - above average
3 - average
2 - below average
1 - poor

The markers worked in teams of three. The papers of all writing exercises had been mixed and randomly numbered so that markers did not know when or by whom they had been written. Each of the papers assigned to a team was marked by all team members and the final grade was arrived at by consensus. The results are recorded by class in the chart which follows. The marks of all students who wrote at least two of the exercises are included.

Results

The class averages obtained on the three writing exercises are listed in the following table.

GRADE 7

CREATIVE WRITING EXERCISES - CLASS AVERAGES

Scale of 1 - 5

CLASS	September 1985	December 1985	May 1986
EXPERIMENTAL			
Class A	2.15	2.35	2.50
Class B	2.35	2.40	2.30
Gifted	3.36	3.75	3.87
COMPARISON			
Class A	2.54	2.84	2.76
Class B	2.64	2.44	2.40
Gifted	3.10	3.50	3.53

When the results of the September 1985 pre-test were compared with the May 1986 post-test for each class, the only significant increase in marks occurred in the gifted class in the experimental program.

Though no significant change was evident in the regular classes, it should be noted that Class B wrote the third exercise under circumstances different from that of the other classes. Their classroom teacher had been ill and absent from school during the week in which this exercise was scheduled. These students subsequently wrote without the day's preliminary notice other classes were given. As they had shown some improvement on the second writing exercise, there may be reason to believe that, if the conditions under which they wrote had been the same as that of the other classes, they may have shown further improvement and the results for the regular experimental classes may have been more favourable.

A comparison of the May 1986 post-test marks of the experimental and comparison groups showed no significant differences though the experimental gifted class showed slightly more growth than its comparison class.

Analysis of Individual Students' Growth in Writing

The narrowness of the rating scale was of some concern and frustration to the markers. They felt that a broader scale would have been more discriminating and revealed greater differences in the marks on successive exercises. Because of this concern and, as class averages do not always reflect individual growth, a further analysis was done of the writing exercises on an individual basis. One of the markers read all papers written by each of the students to determine whether, over the year, there had been more than expected growth in a number of areas, such as maturity, imagination, organization, logical progression, language usage, expression of feelings, richness of description, building of atmosphere, and use of personal experience. Again the papers were marked anonymously and the marker did not know whether students were in the experimental or comparison classes. The results of this analysis are recorded in the following chart.

GRADE 7

ANALYSIS OF INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS' WRITING

Class	Changes Noted
EXPERIMENTAL	
Class A	There was a major improvement among 69% of this class in imagination, maturity, sequencing, structure, use of personal experience, or greater use of reality over fantasy.
Class B	65% of this class showed improvement in logic, structure, vocabulary, expression of feeling, continuity, or maturity.
Gifted	The writing of 76% of these students grew in description, development of ideas, vocabulary, language, maturity, structure, building of atmosphere, expression of ideas, or use of reality.
COMPARISON	
Class A	32% of this class showed some improvement, particularly in development of ideas, use of realism, imagination, or maturity.
Class B	22% of this class showed improvement in maturity, creation of tension, structure, or expression of feeling in the final stories.
Gifted	There was growth in the writing of 65% of these students, which was expressed in greater use of imagination and of personal experience and feelings, or in greater maturity.

When the written work is examined on an individual basis, there appears to be greater growth in the writing skills of the students in the creative drama program. Over two-thirds of the regular students and three-quarters of the gifted students in the experimental program demonstrated growth in the areas examined, while in the comparison classes such growth was apparent in less than one-third of the regular classes and in approximately two-thirds of the gifted class.

Final Writing Exercise

Results of our analysis of the final exercise written in grade 7 were compared to determine whether there was any difference when students were permitted to choose their own topic.

GRADE 7

COMPARISON OF RESULTS OF FREE TOPIC CHOICE AND GIVEN BEGINNING SENTENCE

	Free Choice	Class Average	Given Sentence	Class Average
EXPERIMENTAL				
Class A	41%	2.67	59%	2.39
Class B	42%	1.82	58%	2.33
Gifted	75%	3.90	25%	3.83
COMPARISON				
Class A	39%	2.90	61%	2.86
Class B	40%	2.70	60%	2.20
Gifted	72%	3.39	28%	3.80

Slightly higher percentages of the experimental classes elected to write on topics of their own choice. Class averages for the free choice topic tended to be somewhat higher than on the given sentence except for the gifted comparison class and experimental class B, which had not been given the preparatory notice.

Remarking of Writing Exercises

Because of the concern expressed by the markers about the narrowness of the five-point rating scale, all of the grade 7 papers were remarked during the fall of 1986. A 10-point marking scale was used to determine whether this larger scale would be more discriminating in measuring growth in writing.

To achieve a maximum of consistency, only one team of markers was involved in the remarking. There were no substantial differences in this set of marks when they were compared with the 1-5 scale. This suggests that, despite their discomfort in using a narrower range, the markers, as experienced teachers, had probably internalized and adapted to the five-point scale more than they were consciously aware.

Grade 8

Description of Writing Exercises

Two exercises were assigned in Grade 8. The first was written at the end of September 1986. Students were given a choice of two beginnings. "I wish I were....." or "If I could....". They were given one period to write a draft and another to write good copy.

The second exercise, written early in May 1987, allowed them to choose between beginning their story with the sentence: "Oh, my God, what am I going to do now?", or writing on a topic of their own choice. They were given a day's advance notice, and one period to write a draft and another for producing good copy.

The marking was done by a single team of three, using the same methods as in Grade 7.

Results

The following table contains the class averages obtained on the writing exercises.

GRADE 8

CREATIVE WRITING EXERCISES - CLASS AVERAGES

Scale of 1 - 5

Class	September 1986	May 1987
EXPERIMENTAL		
Class A	2.10	3.46
Class B	2.52	3.63
Gifted	3.30	4.22
COMPARISON		
Class A	2.21	3.55
Class B	1.91	3.35
Gifted	3.33	3.71

The marks on the first exercise were low in the regular classes, though not very different from those on the first exercise in Grade 7. The markers and the language teachers of the regular classes felt that the students had not taken this exercise seriously. There was a tendency to write lists of things rather than a story, e.g. I wish I were a bird, a plane, etc. The initial marks, therefore, may underestimate the students' writing ability. Comparison of the September 1986 pre-test and the May 1987 post-test results showed substantial gains in all classes.

The post-test comparison of the results obtained on the May 1987 writing exercise, while showing no significant differences between the regular classes in the experimental and comparative groups, indicated a significantly higher score for the gifted experimental class than that of its counterpart in the comparison group.

GRADE 8

COMPARISON OF RESULTS OF FREE TOPIC CHOICE AND GIVEN BEGINNING SENTENCE

	Free Choice	Class Average	Given Sentence	Class Average
EXPERIMENTAL				
Class A	46%	4.0	54%	3.4
Class B	54%	3.6	46%	3.4
Gifted	78%	4.3	22%	3.9
COMPARISON				
Class A	57%	3.4	43%	3.0
Class B	45%	3.5	55%	3.2
Gifted	48%	3.3	52%	3.8

About equal percentages of the regular classes in both experimental and comparison schools opted for the free choice or the given sentence. A substantially larger percentage (78%) of the gifted experimental class elected to write on a topic of their own choice. Only 48% of the comparison class did so. This represents a significant change from grade 7 for the comparison class when 72% made this choice.

There was a general tendency towards higher marks among the students who elected a free choice topic, with the exception of the comparative gifted class in which the marks were higher among those who chose the given sentence.

Our assumptions were that a preference for writing on a topic of free choice reflected a greater willingness to take risks and served as an indicator of greater maturity and independence and better writing skills. The tendency toward higher marks among the students electing the free choice topic gives credence to these assumptions, and the higher marks among the experimental classes suggests that the drama program may be credited for these changes.

No analysis of individual growth in writing for grade 8 was carried out, because we felt that students' response to the first exercise did not provide a valid base for comparison.

A Final Comment

Although comparative information has not been obtained, writing which was directly related to the drama program appears to speak best to the growth in skills and in creativity which have been reported in our observations. (see Appendices C-F).

SELF-CONCEPT, LEARNING STYLE AND BEHAVIOURAL MEASURES

No significant differences were found on the pre- and post-test results on any of these measures. Though any change noted was slight, some change occurred in the qualities the program sought to enhance. There was some movement toward right brain preference and to a greater willingness to be innovative on the part of the experimental students. On the whole, these measures appear not to have been sufficiently sensitive to the kinds of qualitative change which were noted in the observation of the drama classes.

Details concerning the administration and results of these measures will be found in Appendix G.

CONCLUSION

This report contains the results of a two-year study designed to measure the effects of a creative drama program on the behaviour and language skills of middle school students. One gifted and two regular classes in grades 7 and 8 took part in the experimental program, and comparison classes were drawn from schools of similar socio-economic backgrounds.

It was apparent, from observation and interviews with students and staff, that there was a great deal of learning in the creative drama program, and that students enjoyed it and had fun in the process. The teacher/catalyst, Gary Schallenberg, a former secondary school English teacher with wide professional experience in acting and directing, was informal and unconventional. He treated students as equals and with understanding and respect.

Much detail about the actual process has been reported in the hope that this process will become more widely known and used. Techniques employed in the drama program helped to build a variety of skills and to change behavioural attitudes. Role-playing, the creation of tableaux, and improvised scenarios contributed to growth in language skills by emphasizing the need for coherent structure, understanding of character, and the use of detail and vivid description. Language growth was evident in the students' oral presentations. Both students and classroom teachers felt that the students' experience in role-playing and improvisations was directly responsible for improvement in writing. Results of the creative writing exercises, written by both experimental and comparison groups, revealed greater improvement in the quality of writing of the experimental classes.

The content of the drama program was designed to open up students emotionally, socially, and physically, while building their language skills. Emphasis was on improving co-operative group work, risk-taking, concentration, listening, problem-solving, and responsibility, encouraging honest and open expression of feeling, and developing a greater sense of physicality by exploring different ways to use the body through games and movement exercises. The awareness of self and others inherent in this approach led to an increase in students' self-confidence, self-control, and understanding; and resulted in greater willingness to take risks, both in performance and in exposing their ideas to others. Group work included playing games, doing movement exercises, and improvising scenarios, all of which contributed to the students' ability to listen to each other, to pay attention to what was happening around them, to concentrate, to work co-operatively, and to have increased respect for each other. Group work also enabled boys and girls to work together more comfortably. Students increasingly used their own resources to solve the problems which arose in their work. They became more animated and less inhibited about expressing feelings.

There was exceptional maturation in student behaviour. Almost no one was untouched, though the most dramatic change occurred in students who were insecure, shy, or emotionally closed down, and in the special education students.

On the written measures of self-concept, learning style, and behaviour, though the changes which occurred were marginal, they tended to be in the direction the program sought to enhance, such as a movement toward right brain preference and a greater willingness to be innovative on the part of the experimental classes. There was some concern that these measures were not sufficiently sensitive to the changes which were noted during observation of the drama classes.

Both students and teachers recognized student growth in language skills and maturity. Teachers also felt there was a professional development benefit for themselves as the techniques and process used in the drama program had direct application to their teaching.

The skills taught by the teacher/catalyst can undoubtedly be taught by others, but the unique relationship between him and the students may be difficult to duplicate. The nature of the drama classes allowed for greater freedom and more direct involvement in the students' learning than what is usually experienced. This gave the students a sense of power they rarely possess and contributed to their enjoyment of the course and their desire to learn.

The following implications for learning emerged from the study:

- teaching of the arts should be approached first through active and direct participation;
- there is value in using youngsters' creativity to heighten their awareness of how their own experience is related to the world in which they live;
- when students are treated with respect and consideration for their own agendas, the teacher's expectations and demands are more likely to be met and may sometimes be exceeded;
- based on the effect on the special education students, creative drama may be a valuable curriculum approach for Basic level and Occupations students as well as students in regular programs;
- further research is required to determine the lasting effect of a creative drama program;
- creative drama provides a learning experience for teachers which enhances their creativity as well as that of their students.

The heart of the argument for drama in education lies in its humanizing effect, its capacity to increase students' understanding of themselves and others and to help them internalize universal, abstract, social, moral, and ethical concepts which will enable them to cope better in an increasingly complex world. The learning which occurred among the students in the creative drama program at Cummer Valley Middle School supports this argument and strongly suggests that creative drama should have a wider application in the curriculum.

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APPENDIX A

Grade 7
Creative Writing Exercises

WRITING EXERCISE

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Please write your name, school and date on the BACK of your papers, not on the front.

2. Two different pictures are being distributed so that half the class will have one, half the other. On the blackboard you will find the title and a first sentence which fits the picture you have been given. Use these in any way you want as beginning ideas for a story. Take the story in any direction that pleases you. Write the story.

3. Spend the first 25 to 30 minutes on a draft, then make a good copy. Try to make your story at least one page long. Hand in your draft with the finished copy.

The title of the story is:

THE THIRD-FLOOR BEDROOM	OR	THE SEVEN CHAIRS

The first sentence is:

It all began when someone left the window open.		The fifth one ended up in France.

CREATIVE WRITING EXERCISE

Tomorrow you will be asked to write a short story in class. Would you please think about what you'd like to write about between now and then.

You have two choices. You may either:

(a) start your story with the following lines:

> This morning was different. When I
> looked into the mirror........

OR

(b) You may base your story on anything you'd like to write about.

You will have a full period to write a draft of the story and you will be given time to make a good copy the following day.

Since this story comes from your own imagination, try to make it as creative as you can, for example by describing your action and characters in lively ways so they are really interesting to the reader.

APPENDIX B

Objective Measures

SELF CONCEPT INVENTORY

JUNIOR HIGH/MIDDLE SCHOOL LEVEL

NAME: ________________________________

SCHOOL: ________________________ TEACHER: ______________

GRADE: ________ DATE: ________

THIS IS A QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGNED TO DETERMINE HOW STUDENTS FEEL ABOUT THEMSELVES AND SCHOOL.

DIRECTIONS: ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES ARE A SERIES OF STATEMENTS PEOPLE SOMETIMES USE TO DESCRIBE THEMSELVES. PLEASE READ EACH STATEMENT CAREFULLY AND DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT IT IS TRUE FOR YOU.

IF YOU THINK A STATEMENT IS TRUE FOR YOU OR DESCRIBES HOW YOU FEEL MOST OF THE TIME, CHECK THE TRUE SQUARE. IF YOU THINK A STATEMENT IS NOT TRUE FOR YOU OR DOES NOT DESCRIBE HOW YOU FEEL MOST OF THE TIME, CHECK THE NOT TRUE SQUARE.

THERE ARE NO RIGHT OR WRONG ANSWERS, ONLY YOU CAN TELL US HOW YOU FEEL.

Board of Education for the City of North York
Department of Educational Research and Evaluation Services

April, 1973

©

	TRUE	NOT TRUE
1. OTHER STUDENTS SEEM HAPPIER THAN I AM	A	B
2. PEOPLE BOSS ME AROUND TOO MUCH	A	B
3. I FIND IT HARD TO TALK IN FRONT OF THE CLASS	A	B
4. I HAVE ONLY A FEW FRIENDS IN SCHOOL	A	B
5. I AM GOOD IN MY SCHOOL WORK	A	B
6. MY CLASSMATES THINK I AM A GOOD STUDENT	A	B
7. MY TEACHERS MAKE ME FEEL I AM NOT GOOD ENOUGH	A	B
8. MOST PEOPLE ARE BETTER LIKED THAN I AM	A	B
9. THERE ARE LOTS OF THINGS ABOUT MYSELF I'D CHANGE IF I COULD	A	B
10. BOTH BOYS AND GIRLS LIKE ME	A	B
11. I AM NOT DOING AS WELL IN SCHOOL AS I WOULD LIKE TO	A	B
12. I LIKE GOING TO SCHOOL A LOT	A	B
13. KIDS USUALLY FOLLOW MY IDEAS	A	B
14. SCHOOL WORK IS TOO HARD FOR ME	A	B
15. I OFTEN FEEL UPSET IN SCHOOL	A	B
16. I FORGET MOST OF WHAT I LEARN	A	B
17. SCHOOL WORK IS FAIRLY EASY FOR ME	A	B

	TRUE	NOT TRUE
18. IT TAKES ME A LONG TIME TO GET USED TO ANYTHING NEW	A	B
19. I CAN GIVE A GOOD REPORT IN FRONT OF THE CLASS	A	B
20. TEACHERS EXPECT TOO MUCH FROM ME	A	B
21. THINGS USUALLY DON'T BOTHER ME	A	B
22. IT'S PRETTY TOUGH TO BE ME	A	B
23. I FIND IT HARD TO STICK TO ONE PROJECT FOR VERY LONG	A	B
24. I AM SLOW IN FINISHING MY SCHOOL WORK	A	B
25. SOMETIMES I WISH I COULD GO TO SOME OTHER SCHOOL	A	B

Name ______________________ School ______________________

Date ______________________

PREFERRED LEARNING MODE

Please answer each of the following questions. There are no right or wrong answers. Check the answer which best describes you.

1. Are you better in	☐ Math	☐ Art
2. Are you better in	☐ Languages	☐ Industrial Arts or Family Studies
3. In school and in your personal life, when you have to make a choice, do you prefer to	☐ follow your hunches	☐ think things through
4. If you had to find an address in a strange city, would you prefer to	☐ follow written directions	☐ use a map
5. Which do you like better	☐ cats	☐ dogs
6. If you have a problem to solve, do you prefer to	☐ look at the whole thing	☐ break it down into small parts
7. When you remember things do you remember them as	☐ words	☐ pictures or images
8. For recreation, do you prefer to play	☐ board games, e.g. chess, checkers	☐ games which involve acting out a part, e.g. charades
9. When you are assigned a project, do you prefer	☐ specific directions	☐ the opportunity to do something new or different
10. Do you prefer to express feelings and ideas	☐ through art, song, dance	☐ through writing

ERES
Sep/85

NAME ______________________________ DATE _________________________

SCHOOL ____________________________

PERSONALITY INVENTORY

DIRECTIONS

On the following pages you will find a series of statements which a person might use to describe him or herself. Read each statement and decide whether or not it describes you. Then indicate your answer by placing a check mark in the appropriate column.

If you agree with a statement or decide that it does describe you, answer **TRUE**. If you disagree with a statement or feel it does not describe you, answer **FALSE**.

Answer every statement either true or false, even if you are not completely sure of your answer.

		True	False
1.	I am very sensitive to what other people think of me.	☐	☐
2.	Some days I am just too tired to do anything.	☐	☐
3.	I prefer work which requires original thinking.	☐	☐
4.	I often have a task finished sooner than necessary.	☐	☐
5.	If I had a cold, it would not bother me to mix with other people.	☐	☐
6.	I only telephone friends when there is something important to discuss.	☐	☐
7.	I can't be bothered trying to find out what others think of me.	☐	☐
8.	I was a very active child.	☐	☐
9.	I would dislike having to think of new toys and games for children.	☐	☐
10.	Little things usually slip my mind.	☐	☐
11.	If I had the money I would contribute to charity regularly.	☐	☐
12.	My life would be miserable if I didn't know a lot of people.	☐	☐
13.	In most situations, I usually agree with the opinions of the group.	☐	☐
14.	Sometimes I can't even find the energy to think.	☐	☐
15.	I am always seeking new ways to look at things.	☐	☐
16.	I prefer to complete a task before resting, rather than taking a "break" in the middle.	☐	☐
17.	I am too busy to find time to help needy people.	☐	☐
18.	It wouldn't bother me to go for days without seeing another person.	☐	☐
19.	When I want to purchase something, I rarely consider other people's opinion of it.	☐	☐
20.	I usually have several projects going at once.	☐	☐

	True	False
21. I might be at a loss if I had to design a new book cover.	☐	☐
22. I sometimes have trouble finding things when I need them.	☐	☐
23. If I accidentally damaged something, I would try to find the owner to pay for the repairs.	☐	☐
24. I enjoy group activities more than the things I do by myself.	☐	☐
25. Before making a decision, I often worry whether others will approve of it.	☐	☐
26. I have no more than an average amount of energy.	☐	☐
27. Original ideas have occurred to me at almost any time of the day or night.	☐	☐
28. It is unusual for me to fall behind in my work.	☐	☐
29. Sometimes it is too troublesome to do exactly what I promised I would do.	☐	☐
30. I like working where I won't be bothered by others.	☐	☐
31. I believe in speaking my mind, even if it offends others.	☐	☐
32. I avoid spending my time just sitting around and resting.	☐	☐
33. I do not have an especially vivid imagination.	☐	☐
34. I prefer starting a new task without detailed plans.	☐	☐
35. Under no circumstances would I give incorrect testimony or evidence in court.	☐	☐
36. I dislike eating alone.	☐	☐
37. It makes me feel uncomfortable to be dressed differently from those around me.	☐	☐
38. I don't have the necessary stamina to participate in long, involved discussions.	☐	☐
39. I enjoy thinking of original plans on which to work.	☐	☐
40. My time is too valuable to be wasted unnecessarily.	☐	☐

	True	False
41. I don't particularly like to be surrounded by a group of noisy people.	☐	☐
42. I do not worry about what I say when out socially.	☐	☐
43. I lead a busier life than most people my age.	☐	☐
44. I obtain more satisfaction from mastering a skill than coming up with a new idea.	☐	☐
45. I can't be bothered making lists of all the things I have to do.	☐	☐
46. If the conductor on a train forgot to take my ticket, I would tell him.	☐	☐
47. If I were travelling alone, I would enjoy engaging in conversation with strangers.	☐	☐
48. I often wonder why some people get pleasure out of doing unconventional things.	☐	☐
49. Some nights I don't even have the energy to read or watch television.	☐	☐
50. People often ask me for help in creative activities.	☐	☐
51. I think a high degree of organization is important in anyone's life.	☐	☐
52. If people choose to drink and drive, it is their own business.	☐	☐
53. I like spare time activities which allow me to get away from people.	☐	☐
54. I am not concerned about how many friends I have.	☐	☐
55. I enjoy all kinds of vigorous hobbies.	☐	☐
56. I don't really think of myself as a creative person.	☐	☐
57. I do not need a neat desk in order to work well.	☐	☐
58. I am very careful not to litter public places.	☐	☐
59. I get lonely when I am left by myself.	☐	☐

		True	False
60.	My actions are governed by the way people expect me to behave.	☐	☐
61.	If the school day were cut in half, I might be able to get through it without becoming exhausted.	☐	☐
62.	I often surprise people with my novel ideas.	☐	☐
63.	Before I start a task, I like to determine the most efficient way of doing it.	☐	☐
64.	If I could get away with it, I would not pay taxes.	☐	☐
65.	I would prefer a quiet evening at home to attending a social event.	☐	☐
66.	I seldom concern myself with how other people feel.	☐	☐
67.	I am rarely too tired to read.	☐	☐
68.	I don't usually contribute many new ideas to a project.	☐	☐
69.	I like to keep my work organized loosely, so that I am not tied down by elaborate plans.	☐	☐
70.	I would not even be tempted to collect unemployment insurance when I could be working.	☐	☐
71.	I would rather telephone a friend than read a magazine in my spare time.	☐	☐
72.	It causes me a great deal of worry if I think that someone doesn't approve of something I have done.	☐	☐
73.	I am not an energetic person.	☐	☐
74.	I often try to invent new uses for everyday objects.	☐	☐
75.	I do not like to leave things until the last possible minute.	☐	☐
76.	I see no need for doing any volunteer work.	☐	☐
77.	I am not interested in knowing a great many people.	☐	☐
78.	I do what I please, not what others say.	☐	☐
79.	I like to be constantly active.	☐	☐
80.	I like a job which demands skill and practice rather than inventiveness.	☐	☐

		True	False
81.	I sometimes start to write letters without finishing them.	☐	☐
82.	Everyone should spend a part of her leisure time working on community projects.	☐	☐
83.	I like to meet as many new people as I can.	☐	☐
84.	I am very concerned about my popularity.	☐	☐
85.	I sometimes feel as if I could sleep for a week.	☐	☐
86.	I would enjoy the chance to make up plots for television programs.	☐	☐
87.	I seldom misplace things.	☐	☐
88.	I collect souvenirs such as towels or glasses from hotels and restaurants I visit.	☐	☐
89.	I find it very relaxing to travel by myself.	☐	☐
90.	I refuse to behave like everyone else just to please people.	☐	☐
91.	I don't like to stay in bed very long when I am sick.	☐	☐
92.	I seldom bother to think of original ways of doing a task.	☐	☐
93.	I don't feel it is important to make good use of every minute of the day.	☐	☐
94.	I think that the penalty for not paying traffic fines should be severe.	☐	☐
95.	I spend a great deal of my spare time with other people.	☐	☐
96.	I try to act in such a way that others will accept me.	☐	☐
97.	I do not feel that I have to keep constantly on the move.	☐	☐
98.	I like to experiment with various ways of doing the same thing.	☐	☐
99.	I am very regular in my habits.	☐	☐
100.	Sometimes the only way to get waited on in a store is to push through to the end of the line.	☐	☐
101.	I don't need the company of others to be happy.	☐	☐
102.	Generally, I don't concern myself with what other people think of my beliefs.	☐	☐

		True	False
103.	I can easily work on several tasks without becoming tired.	☐	☐
104.	I wouldn't know where to begin if I had to design a boat.	☐	☐
105.	When people visit me unexpectedly, I usually have to apologize for my state of disorder.	☐	☐
106.	I would never hunt or fish out of season.	☐	☐
107.	Rather than spend an evening by myself, I would invite a friend over.		☐
108.	I try to change things about myself that other people dislike.	☐	☐
109.	I would be more efficient if I didn't tire so easily.	☐	☐
110.	When I finish school and am working, I hope to develop new techniques in my field of work.	☐	☐
111.	I become annoyed with people who are disorganized.	☐	☐
112.	I see nothing wrong with having a traffic ticket "fixed".	☐	☐
113.	Generally, I prefer to be by myself.	☐	☐
114.	What the general public thinks does not affect my standards or beliefs.	☐	☐
115.	I don't need a lot of sleep to keep up my energy.	☐	☐
116.	I usually continue doing a new job in exactly the way it was taught to me.	☐	☐
117.	I am in such a rush in the morning that I often forget to do something.	☐	☐
118.	If I were called for jury duty, I would serve without hesitation no matter how inconvenient it might be for me.	☐	☐
119.	At a party, I like to get around and talk to all the guests.	☐	☐

APPENDICES C - F

Samples of Students' Writing in the Creative Drama Classes

The original copy of students' writing has been printed unless it was tape recorded or difficult to read or reproduce. Where the material has been typed we have generally used the students' spelling and punctuation.

APPENDIX C

Grade 7 - The Fisherman's Tale

As the turtle and Mr. Yurashima were travelling through the sea he saw a bright glow, which was the sight of a beautiful crystal palace owned by the great emperor of the sea. As they approached the palace they came across a red door, as they got closer they realized that it was made of hundreds of bright red live lobsters.

A crab guard stopped them and asked what they wanted. The turtle said that he wanted to see the emperor. The guard opened the door and escorted them through the crystal hall. Then they stopped at some doors and the guard opened it. Inside was the great emperor of the sea which was half man half fish, the scales were blue and green and he was dressed in a seaweed robe with a golden crown on his head. As they approached him he spoke in a deep voice, "You have killed too many of my companions, look in here (some doors open behind him and inside were thousands of dead fish)" This symbolizes how many of my fellow companions have been caught." But its me job, said Mr. Yurishi "I must punish you by turning you into a fish and consequenzing the hardships of being a fish." SNAP!!! and he was a fish.

He was placed into the sea to live his life as a fish. Mr. Yurushina was now a fish, he was getting hungry so he saw something floating in the water, he approached it.

Something was pulling hi towards the top of the sea. He bit the fat, juicy worm used as bait. He was caught by a fisherman.

Mr. Eurashima's Adventure

As Mr. Eurashima entered the huge throne room of the undersea palace he saw the emperor! He couldn't see him too well because the water currents had shaken all the sand the sea-floor to swirl all around. What he did see will stay in his memory forever, it was the highest, most beatetiful heap of treasure he had ever seen. On top was a throne big enough for a giant, sitting on the throne was a 30 foot killer whale with eyes of pure gold! His pupils were two pearls as black as midnight, his teeth were also gleaming gold and razor sharp!!

The only thing Mr. Eurashima could think of was the treasure, so before the Emperor said anything Mr Eurashima ran (he could also run) to the treasure, grapped a handful and ran for his life!

When Mr. Eurashimo ran out of the throne room he heard the Emperor yell to his men;

"Do not kill him, I must have him alive!"

Mr. Eurashima ran through the throne room doors just to run into a dozen crab-guards! They quickly took his treasure and bound his arms behind his back. He was lead right back to the Emperor.

Mr. Eurashimo was brought before the emperor and was ordered by a harsh voice to bow, he did.

"Mr. Eurashimo," the emperor started, "you have done something very bad. But since I'm very bored down here I'll make you an offer. You may have all my treasure and kingdom if, and only if you defeat me in a sword duel. Do you accept?"

"I do."

An hour later Mr. Eurashimo and the Emperor were in an undersea, Roman-like arena circling a each other with their swords (the Emperor also had a golden trident). Then the fighting started, the Emperor charged with his sword. Mr. Eurashimo blocked and ran back 20' feet, Before the Emperor charged again Mr. Eurashimo threw his sword as hard as he could to the enraged Emperor! It hit him squarely in the chest. The Empe collapsed to the ground but not before throwing his shimmering trident. Mr. Eurashimo turned around and sta to run but he was in front of a wall! He went face first into the wall but turned around a second later to s the flying trident coming straight at him! It went right through his shoulder and pinned him to the wall. He tried frantically to pull it out, but he was too weak to do it. Minutes later Mr. Eurashimo was still on th wall and the Emperor was crawling on the floor in his own pool of blood, Mr. Eurashimo tried for the last time to yank the now red trident out! He put all his strength for one last tug and tried for the last time. He tugged with all his might but to no avail, he died on the wall. Second earlier the Emperor had also died so the treasure, kingdoom and all the fish were Mr. Eurashimo's for the few seconds he lived. All the treasu of Emperor Eurashimo is still being searched for by pe on the land and to this day nobody has ever found it!

The End

"Wow mr. Emperror I never dreamed anyone could look like that. Mr. Euroshima, I want to ask a very big favour of you." "Sure mr. Emperror anything you want." "Well you see, none of the fish know but I am dying. Someone must take over the sea and I have heard that you know alot about the fishes and the sea" "Sure I do" I said all excitedly. "I love the sea." "Yes I know" He replied. "And that is why I want you to stay down here and take over the sea for me when I die." I did not know what to say, to the emperror. for This is the biggest decision I've ever had to make in my whole life. I told him that I needed time to think about it. He showed me aroun the sea and told me about all the fish. He even showed me the ship Titanic. I couldnt believe how many people were inside. It was so sad. When we arrived back at his thrown he asked me what my final decision was. The look on his purple and green pockadot face made me realize that the fish have one ruler and that is the emperror. But my children have two, me and my wife. My wife can take care of my children. The fish will have knoone to look after them if I don't stay, and then they will all die. The emperror and I made a deal that if I stay in the sea and look after the fish, on all holidays I will stay with my family. Months later the emperror died. For years I learned about the sea each day. But then I knew everythi Now there is nothing for me down here anymore. I just sit and watch the fishes.

go by. How I wish I could be with my family again but I can't go back now for I made a promis to the emperor that I would stay. Now I am lonly. I wish I never made that promis to the emperor years ago. Now I sit with nothing to do being lonley, getting old.

APPENDIX D

Grade 7 - Final Improvisations

This is script as written by Jack and Elijah,
and as typed from their taped performance.

Narrator So they get on the sky rider and there going up the frst humuges hill when suddenly came to a complete stop and they relize that there stuck.

hey guys guys were stuck

are you guys all right

yay were okay but just try to put the power back on

We can't the power wont go on again

What DO you mean!

will we can't get the power on so ye'll just have to ~~go~~ climb down

How!!

Just Climb

OK!

Well Desmend you go frist

No way you go first

frist before anybody goes give me a smoke

IMPROVISATION

Scene - a group of kids have sneaked into Canada's Wonderland and Jeff and Emmanuel have climbed up on the roller coaster. They find they are stuck up there. It's night, their friends have gone and they're alone.

J: Now we've been up here for ten minutes and even before we got up here we were scared out of our minds.

E: But now it's pretty cool and fun.

J: We're just sitting here in our seats.

E. I feel okay but my friend here is scared to death.

J: I'm not that scared. I'm having a great time as long as there are no guards here. We should have read the instructions before we came up here.

E: Where are they?

J. They're down where you line up. Before you get in you have to step on that little pedal over there and then you sit on your seat and straddle.

E: Want me to do it now?

J: No you'll fall out and you'll be smashed on the ground. Okay, I've got an idea. Let's see now. Want to go back to the other car?

E: I guess.

J: Okay, let's go all the way down to the end and drop over the side. Don't forget to straddle. Press the pedal. All right man. Like this is fun. You know what? You know how the front end is kind of halfway down the hill and the back is up the hill? I say we should go to the front so maybe our weight will pull it down.

E: Yours, not mine. You're heavier than me.

J: Look who's talkin'. I only weigh 92. Check out the guy who weighs 110.

E: No way, not my weight.

J: Oh shut up. Let's climb over

E: Put your weight over so it won't tilt.

J: You have to straddle, try to lean forward. More. Forget it man you'll fall. Holy...

E. Forget it. I'm not going anywhere.

E: Hey look at those guys. They look like little ants.

J: Shut up. There's Belinda. You can see her fall she's so clumsy.

E: How do you know it's her?

J: She's flipping out all over the place. I don't think we're going to get anywhere.

E: We'll die up here.

J: Don't be stupid.

J: You know what would be cool. If we had roller skates we could ride down the track.

E: That would be cool man.

J: I've got an idea. Do you wanna slide down on our butts?

E: No way man. We will burn our butts.

J: So what? It'll be fun.

E: You won't be able to sit on your behind for two weeks

J: You know this is serious stuff. We could die here.

E: I'm getting a little scared.

J: You're a scaredy cat.

E: I bet you're scared too.

J: I'm not that scared, I'm tired.

E: This place isn't open for another two weeks. The guards won't come. How will we get down? We have to get down by ourselves.

J: That's true.

E: Look how high it is. It's a hundred feet.

J: We've got to jump down. Now look at those guys, they're leaving us.

E: (Yells) Hey guys, guys. Now we're stuck for sure. This is all your fault.

J: It's not my fault. You're the one who wanted to come up in the first place.

E. You said we'd come up here and have some fun. Now we're stuck.

J: You know our parents will kill us if we're not already dead.

E: They won't have to kill us. We'll be dead for sure.

J: No we won't.

E: But how will we get down? We can't just be Hercules and jump.

J: I've got an idea. Let's try hard now just to relax.

E: I'm scared man. It's too high. You go.

J: I'm not goin'. I'm not scared, but you go.

E: I'm scared. If you're not scared you go first. If any of us have to die, it's you.

J: Okay, we've got to be straight with ourselves. I'm totally scared.

E: See, I told you.

J: Let's go together.

E. You're lying. You're not scared.

J: Okay. Let's try sliding down.

E: Look at it man. The bars are slippery.

J: That's cause I'm gettin' all sweaty and I'm peeing in my pants.

E: I'm all sweaty too but I'm not peeing in my pants.

J: If I get any more scared than I am I think I'm gonna crap in my pants.

E: I can just feel myself falling down, killing myself.

J: I don't know, maybe we just need .... No, we don't need any food right now. I'm not hungry.

E: But I am.

J: I've got an idea. How about we get a little sleep and think later?

E: I can't sleep now. I'm too scared.

J: Have you got any better ideas?

E: No, maybe we can scream all night.

J: Forget it. There's no one around to hear us.

E. That's for sure.

J: Our own guys have gone home. The fair is not going to open for another week. We could die of starvation. I wish my mom was here. She'd know what to do.

E: Okay, I guess it was a good idea to sleep. We'd better get some shuteye.

J: How the heck are we to sleep in this small, little area? If we move too much we'll fall to our death for sure.

E: Don't even think about that.

J: Okay, let's just try and sleep.

E: (makes a despairing sound)

J: Did you hear that?

E: What?

J: The roller coaster just creaked.

E: I can't sleep like this. I'm uncomfortable.

J: You wanna just sleep. Try it like this (they arrange themselves as best they can)

E¦ Hey, I can't sleep.

J: I can't either. We may as well just stay up. Whatever yu do from now on stay still because the whole roller coaster just creaked again. I'm afraid the whole thing will fall.

E: You know what man? This is sort of fun in a way.

J: I'm scared.

E: If you really think about it - sleeping in the air is rather fun.

J: Yeah! Fun! Wow! We could die having fun sleeping up here.
I've an idea.. Do you have that knife in your back pocket?

E: Yeah, I got it. What do you want it for?

J: We may as well carve our intials before we die.

E: Yeah, why not.

J: Hey this is metal. I thought it was wood.

E: What are you carvin'?

J: I'm just scrapin the metal. It's kind of screwin' up your knife.

E: Oh well....

J: There.

E: Have you got anything to eat?

J: I've got that chocolate bar but sorry to say it's kinda wet.

E: Just drop it down there and let's see how it splats.

J. (laughing excitedly) Splat! I heard it from here!

E: That could be us you know.

J: Really man! Holy.... Oh I'm gonna at least carve your name. I've an idea. Let's try and get down.

E: You go first man.

J: Whatever you say. But don't forget they'll never forget us now. They'll know we were alive because we just carved our initials.

(They start to climb down, get scared and climb back up)

J: Let's try something else. Oh, oh, it just creaked again.

E: The whole roller coaster is on a slant.

J: Okay, I've got an idea.

E: (sarcastically) Yeah! Tilt it the other way.

DRAMA SCRIPT

Alexandra..........................K
John...............................S
Killer.............................M
Lizzie.............................J
Mark...............................D
Nicola.............................K

Scene - Northview High School campus, under a willow tree. A student body meeting has been called, but the president is not there. John and Lizzie discuss what could have happened to make him late. Nicola stands a little ways off, pacing, looking worried, and looking in the direction of the road at intervals. Alexandra enters.

Alexandra : I inquired with Alex, Sandra, Steve and Cindy, but they haven't seen evidence of him. I told them to contact us if they discover him. He still hasn't arrived? (John and Lizzie shake their heads. Alexandra bites her lip) Something detrimental must have occured to him. He would never be overdue for a student body convergence.

Lizzie : Well, maybe something's happened to him!

John : (impatiently to Lizzie) What do you think we've just been saying? (to Alexandra) If you ask me, Mark was the wrong choice for president, and this proves it. Now, if I had been chosen -

Nicola sights Mark and Killer, and calls out to others, interrupting John.

Nicola : He's here, you guys!

John : At last!

Lizzie : Oh, good! in unison

Alexandra : Oh, how cheering!

Mark and Killer come in with a ghetto blaster, which is on a high volume and is blaring heavy metal music. Killer is stoned. Mark is laughing. Nicola comes up to Mark.

Nicola : (hands on hips) Mark! Mark! MARK! (she reaches for the ghetto blaster and turns it off. Mark blinks and frowns)

Mark : (angry) Hey!

Alexandra, Lizzie and John come up

Nicola : (scolding) Mark, where have you been? We've been waiting, what, (she looks at her watch, and is shocked by the time it displays) an HOUR for you! We thought something terrible had happened to you!

Mark : (annoyed) Well, now you know it hasn't.

Nicola : (shocked) Mark! I'm surprised at you! You're an hour late for no apparant reason and - Mark, this isn't like you!

Mark : (confused and mad) W-well, what am I late for? And who are you to tell me this isn't like me?

John : The commitee meeting, remember? You're president?

Lizzie : Hey, Mark, where've you been?

Mark : I don't know what you're talking about. I don't remember any commitee meeting!

Alexandra : Mark, what are you implying? Have you been subject to amnesia? You are president of the student body, and have certain duties to fufill, such as getting to your conferences on time. Has that memory been abandoned from your mind?

Mark : (meanly) I think it has, and I'm glad about it, okay? And if you don't like the way I am, maybe you'd like to change me! I'm open to suggestions!

Nicola : (desperately) Look, let's just forget about this -

John : (mumbling) Yeah, sure.

Nicola : (continuing) - and let's get on with the meeting.

Lizzie : (perplexed) Mark, you're not acting like you usually do...

Mark : (yelling) No! NO! I won't come to your meeting! I don't feel like it, so just leave me alone, okay?

John : (angry) Mark, your feeling like it or not doesn't count. You have to live up to your responsibilities!

Mark : Yeah? Well maybe I don't want no responsibilities! And I'll say something that does count - I QUIT!

Killer : (stoned) Yeah!

Mark turns the ghetto blaster back on, and he and Killer walk away. Nicola and Alexandra are stunned. Lizzie looks confused. John's face implies hope.

Alexandra : I-I'm utterly staggered.

Nicola : (totally stunned) He quit?

Alexandra : He couldn't quit!

John : Well, he did!

Lizzie : Mark quit?

John, Nicola, and Alexandra walk to willow tree and sit down.

Lizzie : (confused) Why did he quit?

Nicola : I-I just can't believe this! That couldn't have been Mark with that attitude, and he couldn't have quit! I-it just couldn't have been Mark. Not the Mark we know.

Alexandra : (suddenly discovering something) But have any of you been aware that Mark's behavioral pattern has been quite abnormal recently? For instance, I passed him in the hall the other day and attempted to converse with him about today's itinerary, but he disregarded me totally, and quite rudely.

John : In English please?

Lizzie : (to John) I thought that was English.

Nicola : Look, we've got to do something about this. Something is wrong with Mark, and I'm really worried. I refuse to believe that was him back there who quit. The Mark we know just wouldn't quit like that (she snaps her fingers). There is something wrong with him.

Lizzie : (trying to be helpful) Maybe he's sick.

Alexandra : I am in agreement with you. let's look at the lowest possible circumstances. Perhaps he's gotten himself into trouble.

Lizzie : With the principal?

John : You two are really dumb. And she (points to Lizzie) is even dumber. You females are all alike. Never practical. Mark has said himself to leave him alone, so why bother about him? You seem to think he is the problem. The problem is that there is the office of president to be filled, and if I would be allowed to recommend myself...

Nicola : John, how could you?

Lizzie : John, you're strange!

Nicola : John, Mark is our friend. Have you forgotten that?

John : Okay! Alright!

Alexandra : Mark is not himself. I am quite concerned and frightened about all this.

John : Well, I'm mad! We worked hard for Mark, and now he just quits? Three years of hard working. For what? So he can walk all over us?

Nicola : John, you are so unfeeling! For every bit that we worked, Mark worked twice as hard. He poured his heart, soul, and body into this. Can't you remember him saying he meant to be president when he got to high school? He saw all sorts of things that he could change if he had the chance. He wanted all sorts of good things for us, for everybody! That was his dream! For weeks before the election, he breathed, ate, slept, and *lived* campaigning! He meant to win, and he did! No-one worked as hard as Mark. Can't you see that? It wouldn't just take a little thing to upset him like it has! He must be in big trouble, something heavy duty!

Lizzie : (sarcasticly) Like alchohol, right?

Alexandra : (just remembering something) Precisely! Of *course*!

Lizzie : Huh?

Alexandra : Look. Remember back in February we were requested for Social Science to make a project on a difficulty in humanity? Well, I did my own on drugs, and in a segment of my report I investigated the effects that drugs have on people, and it just occured to me that lately, Mark has demonstrated a lot of the symptoms!

Lizzie : (wide-eyed) Mark's on *drugs*? (looks like crying)

Nicola : (unbelieving) That's *impossible*!

John : You're kidding. *Mark*?

Lizzie : (to John) Well, *finally* you're beginning to show a little concern! And it's about time too! (to others, emotionally) I have to put up with a lot of arguing from you guys. I hate it! So I hide inside myself till it's over. Drugs aren't funny! I've been through it before, and it looks like I'll have to again! You all think I'm dumb, slow to catch on! I'm just hiding, that's all! From the world! I'm trying to hide from the death of - (she falters) - my brother. He was ambitious and smart, just like Mark. Then mum and dad got to be too much for him, expecting him to be so smart and goody-two-shoes all the time. He didn't realize it at first, but then he just got fed up. *He* went on drugs, too. And the deeper in he went, the worse it got. But still, no-one could stop or help him. Because he kept it all inside himself, which made it even more painful. In fact, no-one but his *new* friends knew about it, and you think *they* cared? Then one night he came home at around three in the morning. My parents were furious. "We thought we could trust you," they said. But he wasn't really listening. He was stoned out of his mind. He didn't know what he was doing. He started throwing things around in desperation. And then he told us about everything. It all came out *then*, when it was too late. After that, he said he couldn't take anymore, and left. We tried to stop him, but couldn't. Next day the police found him, dead, next to dad's '78 Chevette, all smashed up. I lost a brother in that. And now you're upset because you might lose a friend. You know you are!

Lizzie's face screws up. She's trying to keep from crying. There is a slight pause. Then Nicola pats Lizzie on the shoulder.

Nicola: (awkwardly) It's okay, it's okay. Uh - you're right, you know. (to others) We *have* to stop Mark before it's too late.

Alexandra: (scaredly) Indeed. How? We're not just cavorting and frolicing here. This is critical! The event we were cautioned about earlier in our lives is *actually* *taking* *place*, here, now. How are we going to hit upon a solution?

Everyone freezes, and then after a slight pause, the lights go out. Around five seconds later, the lights come back on. The scene - Mark and Killer talking. Lizzie is hiding, spying on them. Killer takes a joint out of his pocket, and they both light up. Lizzie flinches, remembering her brother, but keeps silent.

Mark: (words slurred) And who?

Killer: (also speaking slightly slurred) Susie, Lulu, and Annette. We're gonna have a *good* time tonight!

Mark: Who's bringing the good stuff?

Killer: Pete. He'll get through no prob. He'll just pinch a little green stuff from his parents. They'll never miss it. They're loaded.

Mark: Excellent!

They walk off.

Lizzie: (to herself, but out loud) I think we're gonna crash a party!

A very slight pause. Then the lights go out.

END

McDonald's Massacre - Bronx Style

Characters: Andie Kelly, worker at restaurant (female punk)
Lisa Manns, runaway
Jonathon Gordon Benjamin Alexander Matthew Arlington III - "Rambo"
Joe Smith, teenage metalhead
Sgt. Larson, a police officer
Arthur Crockett, a police officer

The setting of this play is a dirty, rundown McDonalds restaurant somewhere in the Bronx, New York. There is a counter on the right side of the stage and across from it is a table surrounded by chairs. In between is a chalkboard facing the audience with the menu written on it. (On the chalkboard is also written - Special! Buy a large milkshake, get a hamburger and small fries for a dollar more.). Sitting on the counter is Andie Kelly who is filing her nails and loudly chewing gum. A teenage metalhead struts in from the top left corner of the stage. He is carrying a ghetto blaster that is blasting loud raucous music at top volume He puts the radio down on the counter and looks around.

(Andie climbs down, looking irritated)

Andie: Uh listen, couldja turn the radio off?
Joe: Huh?
Andie: Turn the radio off!
Joe: Did you say something?
Andie: I said, turn- TURN THE DAMN RADIO OFF!
Joe: Oh, okay (turns radio down)
Andie: (tapping nails on counter) Okay, what do you want?
Joe: Hamburgers, fries----
Andie: The special?
Joe: Ya.
(Andie mimes getting everything, banging everything around. She gets hamburgers and fries, then stops and turns around)
Andie: What kind?

Joe: Huh? (Lisa walks in and stands behind Joe

Andie: (sighs) What kind of milkshake?

Joe: Oh, strawberry.

(Gets milkshake, and brings everything over to the counter. She pull out a tray, piles everything on and shoves it at Joe)

Andie: It's a buck fifty.

(Joe pulls out some money, gives some to Andie, who gives him change. He takes the tray, turns up the volume of the music and sits down at the table, propping his feet up on it.)

(Lisa walks up to the counter. Andie checks her out and smiles in a superior way)

Lisa: I'll have the special, okay? And I want a chocolate milkshake.

(Andie mimes getting everything, throws it on the counter, and stands with her hands on her hips.)

Andie: That's a buck fifty.

Lisa: (obnoxious tone) I'd like a tray.

Andie: Oh, I'm SO sorry! (Pulls out a tray, slams it down)

Lisa: If you want customers, you should be nicer, ya know.

Andie: Look, don't mouth off to me. (She throws everything o the tray and pushes it at Lisa, who tosses some money at her, an then walks off with the tray)

Andie: Oh, good day -- sir.

FREEZE

(Two police officers are pacing back and forth in front of the table complaining to each other)

Sgt. Larson: You know, being a police officer is a re drag—really boring. I mean, we make our living off of other people's mistakes! They park in the wro spot, we give them a ticket (gesturing wildly). The

the highlight of our day-giving a traffic ticket.
Crockett: I know, I know. I just wish that for once we could apprehend a criminal!
Sgt. Larson: Ya I know. Are you hungry? Come on, let's get something to eat.
(They exit off to the left)

TABLEAU UNFREEZES

(Lisa and Joe are eating, and Andie is sitting on the counter again, filing her nails)
(A Rambo type person comes barging in shooting a gun around. He jumps onto the table while Andie hides under the counter. Lisa and Joe both stand up, surprised)
Rambo: Okay, I want all you preps over there! (points to corner where Lisa quickly scurries)
Joe: Did you call me a prep?!
Rambo: Gonna do anythin'? Ya!
Joe: Okay.
(He walks slowly over to the corner, leans against the wall, pulls out a cigarette and starts smoking)
Rambo: Now don't move or I'll shoot!
Lisa: Listen why are you doing this?
Rambo: Shut up! (Jumps down from the table, and a board against the counter falls. This is a cue for Sgt. Larson to sneak in behind Rambo and hit him over the head with a board, causing Rambo to fall over onto the counter. Andie crawls out from underneath while Larson and Rambo struggle with the gun. Eventually Rambo stands up, pointing the gun at Sgt. Larson.
Andie: Listen-uh listen mister. If my boss comes in and finds blood on the floor, and all over the place, you'll be dead! Of course I'll be dead too, but heh-
Rambo: Shut up!

Andie: (scared) Okay, sure thing. No problem---

Lisa: Why do you want to shoot us?! What do you think you're doing?

Sgt. Larson: Hey shut up kid! (turns to Rambo) Well, if you're going to shoot us, shoot us!

Lisa: Why-

Rambo: Listen, if you had my life, you'd be doing this too! All my life my parents have been pressuring me. Get good marks! Get good marks! They didnt care diddly about me! Only my marks! (raises gun, stops, lowers gun)

Lisa: But listen mister! What are you gonna prove if you shoot us? I mean, do you think anybody'd care if I was shot? If you were shot? What are you gonna prove by shooting us? I mean, if your parents don't love you now, and didn't love you then, they never will....

Andie: What are you-are you trying to be Rambo?

Rambo: No, I'm trying to prove that I have a mind of my own, and that if I decided to do something, I'd do it. Then my parents will know that they can't push me around.

Lisa: Well, why are you-

Rambo: Listen-I ran away from home when I was 18 and lived with my three older brothers. They hated my parents too. My oldest brother Richard was killed while he was fishing. They said he drowned. Jake is a druggie, and Stephen is an alchoholic. Then Jake got hauled off to jail and my parents took me home. I ran off last night.... (gestures) Now listen, I don't have time for all this talk (grabs some money sitting on the counter, shoves it into his pocket)

Lisa: Well, you think that you've had it bad? You think YOU'VE had it bad? (pauses) My parents didn't care less 'bout me. Not even my marks, 'cause I didn't have any. They didn't never send me to school. They said they didn't have the money. My dad, he drank all the time, and he would hit me and my mom. My mom, she was a maid. Every night, she'd come home with a coupla bucks. My dad would take the money and slug her and go out into the street for the night. One night my mom comitted suicide, so I ran off. (looks down). I'd give anything for school. You're lucky. Sure, maybe you was pressured, but your parents sent you to school. They didn't love you, but - gee! Nobody has parents who love them nowadays. So stop complaining! If you live in this area, you gotta have a hard life! (steps towards him)

Rambo: (raising the gun) NO!

(Crockett enters, steps behind Rambo, raises gun)

Crockett: Make one move - one move and I'll blow your head off, I swear it!

(Hits him over the head with a gun, and Rambo falls over. Everybody gathers around him. The police officers are smiling and patting each other on the back)

Crockett: Great, we FINALLY caught a criminal!

Sgt. Larson: All right!

Lisa: No, don't take him away! He didn't mean nothing!

Andie: Take him away and lock him up! And (points at Lisa) take her too!

Joe: Kill the sucker (from the corner)

Lisa: No, please don't!

Andie: Yes, he's a crazy!

Sgt. Larson: (finally realizes what's going on) Listen ladies, we have to take him away. He was shooting a gun!

(Joe walks by, looks down and taps his cigarette over Rambos head, then walks out, turning up the volume on the radio)

THE END

APPENDIX E

Grade 8 - Final Improvisations

Monologues, Letters
and Stories

MONOLOGUE

I wish I could get out of here. I'am so scared. I remember when my father & I where seperated. He was crying I had'nt seen him cry since my mother had passed away. I wish he was hear to comfort me I'am scared and alone. What is going to happen to me next? I remember when I was little he would show me pictures of how beutiful the world was before... The grass was green the sky was blue as my fathers eyes, the sun shone and the flowers blomed. But know the grass is dead the sky is gray & Dark and the sun has gone down forever. What did those people trie to prove why did they drop ~~the~~ those bombs? We are still fighting, the war is not yet over.

MONOLOGUE

I'm scared. Not only for myself, but for my children. My husband is dead, killed by torture in the military. My children are the soul purpose in my life. And if they take my children I'll ...... I don't know what.

What should I do? This thought keeps on ringing constantly in my head day and night until I feel as if I've gone crazy.

I need help. But what if the military catches me? What will happen to my children? I guess I'll have to take a risk, but very careful with the plan. I could go to an isolated place in the island with my neighbours and send some kind of code to the nearest country. Radio waves might work and I have all the equipment stared in my basement, for my husband was an electrician.

Maybe it'll work. No, it has to work.

Simultaneous monologues of characters in the scientific expedition in space scenario.

Michael

Ha. Those guys think their smart trying to trick me. I know what they are up to. They probably have the piece hidden somewhere, and why would I want to steal the piece? I want this mission to work just as much as the others.

I hope they get what's coming to them. I could just see them getting caught with that part and ... wait a minute. What if their not joking. What if someone did steal the piece and where are we going to get another one that cost 2 million by itself. We don't have that much and why would someone want to sabotage this mission? It's only a scientific mission, it's not going to hurt anyone... I didn't take that part. I hope we find who did.

Janice

I wonder if Michael really did take it. I've known him ever since grade one and I know that he has never stolen in his life. I could be blaming him for something he didn't really do. I feel so bad but if he didn't who did and why? I should tell him that I trust him and I know he wouldn't jeopardize this project for the world. Why am I holding back? It's almost like I really don't believe him and I know I do.

Diane

I wish the person who is responsible would just give in and tell us. I know I didn't take it and I don't want to blame anybody else. I don't know what to do any more because if I find the part they'll probably think I took it and I don't want to get blamed. This is a hard choice. I want to help my friends. I wish that screw would just show up. I just can't wait to get my hands on the person who took it. Probably there's a thief around here somewhere. I don't think it could be any of my friends because I really got to know why they would want to steal it.

Daniela

That Janice, I didn't believe her. Trying to get away with stealing that part. I can tell by her looks. It looks so guilty as if she's trying to hide something, like that part of our time machine. I personally think we should get rid of the thief. In that case we better get rid of Janice. I've always had a feeling about her. I never really trusted her the day I met her. She used to steal from me when were were working. She'd tell me after and pay me. But still the thought of her doing it without asking.

She is so guilty.

Erica

Actually this is my fault. I put that piece in a secret place. I don't want the time machine working. I don't want to go to that dumb place. This is so dangerous. I'm so scared that I'll be killed. I'm only fifteen. I don't want to die. I think this is useful but I feel upset about Michael. He's honest. But I can't tell him the truth. If I do, I have to go there. I don't know what I am going to do. If I tell Michael, will he be mad at me.

Simultaneous monologues produced by two LD students.

Ally: It's so hard being a General. So much pressure. So many responsibitities...

Mich: I can't stand being a soilder anymore. it's just too hard..

Ally: I've been a general for five years and it's so frightening. If the vietnamees capture me, they torcher me.

Mich: I haven't had a decent nights sleep in months. I have hardly have anytime to eat. There's an awful disease going around, it's so bad I can't pronounce it...

Ally: I'm sick of war, I'm sick of being a general. Why can't life be normal. Why do I have to go to sleep at night wondering if it will be my last...

Mich: I just want to go home, to my family, Where I'm safe! I'm so afrid to die...

Ally: I have so many disisions to make, life is so frightening.

Mich: One man in our group has already been shot. What if I'm next?... I can't die, I just can't.

LETTERS

Dear May Beth,

Before you read this please sit down and please remain calm. I want you to promise me that you won't panick. The military are taking over our island and we have no idea why. We are forbidden to leave our island and they are taking all the boys around 15. I'll bet I can read your mind right now! You will be saying, "My lord, the twins are 15!" I wish I could tell you that they're safe but yes, Blake and Chad were taken without their consent. Although I am so very upset about this dear, I can say also that they both put up a hell of a good fight! The most important thing I must tell you is that we are in desperate need of help. Almost all of our children are gone and we have to leave soon but we won't just leave without them! Please, I hope you will pass word about this and tell help to hurry and rescue us before it's too late.

Love always,
Your sister,
Jay Lynne

Dear Brother,

I know your too far away to put much action into this problem. But we need lots of help, you were right when you said not to move here. Its terrible here, all the children under 15 encluding my son are all being taken away. The military are not allowing anyone to leave the island.

But we have a plan that nobody knows about, we are taking people off the island by boat, we are going to an island that's just off the coast not too far away. There is so much I have to say about all the disappearances around here. Just the other day I was stopped on the highway, they searched my car. To save all the children in the nebourhood I offer to hide them in my cellar. We take food to them and we wait till its save to get them off the island. All we have is a canoe and a rowboat. It would be real helpful if you would bring your yacht. We must leave the island in the next 48 hours. We are planning to take everybody off tomorrow night at 12 midnight. I'm to be there with my boat and my neighbour will be there with his. Bring lots of those fake I.D.'s because we'll need them to get pass the coast gurad. Don't worry about me till then. I'll be o.k. We're meeting at the dock in Cummer Valley bay at the north end. Please be there we need your help, if you and your large boat was here it would be a big help.

Needing help,

Your brother,
Andy

Dear Mama,

How are you? I'd like to say I'm fine but I'm not. I hate to tell you that Andy Jr. has been taken away by the military men. Oh mama, I don't know what to do. Andy and I are both so worried. We have had meetings with friends and neighbors trying to decide what to do but we still haven't thought of a plan. There have been many suggestions but we still haven't taken action. Do you think there is some way that you and papa could help us? We need all the help we can get. We want to leave this terrible island but no one is going anywhere until we get Andy Jr. back! I'm so worried that he will get shot or put through terrible pain and I just can't live with that. Please! Write back as soon as possible!

Love you always,

Cindy and Any

P.S. We need your help!

Note the code devised by using the first letter of each line.

C O

DEAR ANGELA,
I aM fine. How are you?
Rori has just gotten over a cold and
Erica is now taking piano lessons.
Can you come & visit Soon? I hope
that you come within a Month!! I
Have to tell you about Erica's birthday.
Even though you were here
last Month quite a few peo-
ple have heard about your inherita-
nce and are anxious to Meet you.
Evan wouldn't Mind the
expense would he? the whole family is invite-
d. How is the weather? we ar-
e having alot of rain here.
Do come as soon as
possible.

Sincerely,
Mildred.

P.S. Have you heard
TaMlin Jacob's new
Song? It's called,
HELP ME!

D E

Dear Kristi

I just went through the most terrifing experience of my life. You now how about 3 weeks ago I went camping to get away from my parents? Well I should have stayed home.

Everything was perfect. we were just sitting around the campfire talking about our parents when Anthony Pernell & David went to get more firewood. Then Pernell came running back saying that David got hit over the head with something. Elsie, Alison Carmen & I sort of looked at eachother stunned but we got up & followed Perry back to the woodpile. David was laying there looking unconsious and I guess he was. We were all very quiet as we picked David up and brought him back to camp. Once we got there he woke up and the colour started coming back into his face. He said he felt fine except for a headache so the guys went swimming. Then Alison & Carmen went for a walk. Now that I think of it Carmen told Alison they were going for a walk. I didn't think anything of it then. Elsie & I were getting ready for bed when we heard Alison screaming. We looked around and we saw Carmen with tears in her eyes, holding a knife to Alisons throat. Alison was as white as a ghost. God I have never been so scared in all my life than I was at that moment. I just stood there frozen, I couldn't move!!! Elsie started screaming at me to go get the guys, than I snapped out of it and I ran. Pernell ran towards Carmen trying to knock her down. Then Carmen stabbed him in the arm. I just screamed and felt faint. I felt so useless!!. David & Anthony pinned Carmen down and she was screaming "you killed my brother! You killed my brother!"

I was so out of it I didn't even notice. We finally got Carmen and Perry into the truck and then it wouldn't

start! I'm not exactly sure how long it took until it started but it seemed like hours!.
We got Perry to a hospital and he is fine now.
Carmen is in a mental institute and getting better.

Write Soon!

L♡ve
Julie

Great Spirit Stories

1987 - A SATIRE

A long, long time ago, when people were very ignorant, it was 1987 on the planet earth.

Now we all know the earth was burned up years ago, but this is its story about its last hundred million years of existence. It all started on Februry 23, 1987.

All the people believed that Great Spirits controlled the planet and that they gave them rain, sunshine, warmth, heat, etc. In their homes, these people used machines by the dozens. Machines to do their homework, to cook their food - they even had machines to dial the phone. You can imagine what happened of course - the peoples' brains started to melt.

Except for one person. Her name was Alyssa, but she was known around the planet as The Holy Mechanic. She came from a long, long line of mechanics, and it was one of her ancestors who discovered and set up these machines. She herself had never actually seen these machines, but she'd heard of what they looked like - gigantic, hulking silver beings which pinged, beeped, roared, shook and squeaked continuously.

Her grandmother, Andrea, had built a device that eliminated the Holy Mechanic's one and only job - it automatically turned the machines on, and also turned them off. So everything was great for Alyssa. She just went to school (grade 11), and did other abnormal, boring things (remember they were primitives). Hunky-dory. Fantastic. Terrific.

Until one day.

With a shuddering stop one early dawn, all the machines turned off. And so did the Andrea device.

It was early morning, so Alyssa was the only one who knew, and as soon as she felt the earth stop, she jumped out of bed.

"Oh f--k. Darn - on the the morning of my history exam too! I don't even know what to do!", she exclaimed as she changed.

Since her family was sleeping, she quietly crept up to the attic and searched for and found an old, old textbook. She then grabbed a pop-tart and a screwdriver and climbed into a specially rigged elevator in her basement. She kept muttering to herself. "Why is it the oldest GIRL who has to be the Holy Mechanic? What a title! I'm only 16, and I'm responsible for the world! We don't need these machines. We got along fine without them. And why is it that it's the oldest girl? Just 'cause my ancestors were feminists - do I have to suffer?"

She slammed a button and the elevator made its descent. "In history, we read about it. Machines were never used in the olden days. They had horses. And I don't even know how these machines *work*. When was the last time *you* saw a 16 year old girl run the world?" She addressed this last question to her half-eaten pop-tart.

"I wonder about the last time anyone USED this elevator. Grandma fixed it all up so I wouldn't have to do anything, and the f...ing machines malfunction. It's also 4 in the morning!" She realized she was talking to herself again - and stared at her desert boot the rest of the way to the centre of the earth, chewing thoughtfully on her pop-tart.

Finally, with a thump, the elevator stopped. Alyssa woke up and opened the steel doors. Immediately a tongue of fire came through the doors. She slammed the doors shut again. Flipping through the textbook, she found the chapter titled "Approach."

* * *

"I feel so stupid. This is unreal. This can't be happening to me! I look like a wally!"

A white suit, absolutely gigantic came waddling out of the elevator. On it was a huge round orb, and out of it protruded millions of little spikes with coloured bulbs on the end. In the little workbag was the textbook and the screwdriver.

Slowly and painfully, Alyssa manouvered over to the big steel door- in the middle of the flames - marked Machine Room - Staff Only. Carefully, ever so carefully, she stuck out two arms (how she managed, she didn't know) and grasped the handle and lay backward with all her might. The door didn't budge. She fell backward into the flames, but luckily the 40 year old suit didn't burn up.

Slowly and painfully, she got up.

* * * * * * *

Ah, finally! Inside the Machine Room. (Only after about the 11th try.) Alyssa whipped her helmet off her head and immediately felt half an inch of her hair melt off. She put the helmet back on.

"Oh no. I have to do this in this ... this ... thing! I am Alyssa MacNeil. Instead of being at my midterms, I am in the middle of the earth in a room for Staff Only with a textbook, a screwdriver, a half-eaten pop-tart, and in a gigantic space suit. I am only 16!"

"HELP!!!"

Immediately, her cry of desperation was answered. There was a rumbling, a blast of smoke, sulphur and fire and a whirling mini tornado appeared, out of which a woman slowly materialized. She had a long black robe that whipped around her body. She began speaking to Alyssa.

"I am the Great Spirit," she began.

"Alyssa, we are in trouble, as you can see. Our machines have broken down, and I have summoned you here to tell you what to do. It's very easy actually. All you must do is to return here in a week, preferably with people to help you, and in here will be the Plug of Power. All you have to do is give us a fresh start. Unplug the Plug and just sit there for two seconds. Let it re-energize and stick it back in. Good luck. It will be hard." And in another puff of smoke, she was gone.

* * *

"What's so hard about unplugging then plugging a plug back in?" Alyssa thought in the elevator as it began its ascent. "I can do it. I'll just get Jen, Lisa, Rob, and Jay to help me. They would be glad to help. They would never say no!"

* * *

"No," said the short, perky brown haired girl, shaking her curls vigourously.

"Jen! ... why not?" Alyssa was frustrated.

"I don't want to go in the middle of a fire, and plus, we have a calculus exam that day."

"Oh - skip the exam. You can retake it if they know you're coming with me. You'll have more time to study!"

"Sorry, Alyssa. I have a date that night, and if I went out with my hair half melted like yours, I'd die."

* * *

"No," said the tall brown haired boy, pushing up his glasses.

"But ... "

"It's idiotic. A room in the middle of the earth? Come on, Alyssa. We know you're slightly crazed, but aren't you carrying this a bit far?"

"Fine, Jay. Forget I said anything," said Alyssa.

* * *

"No. Uh-uh. There is no way."

"Rob .... "

"Are you crazy? You were stupid to go there in the first place. You're lucky you're not a lump of ... flesh. Hey - your hair's melted."

"Oh, shut up. But why not?" Alyssa was quite desperate by now.

"We have a date that night. I don't want to spend it in the middle of the earth."

"We can go another time..."

"No, Alyssa."

* * *

The rest of the week was torture for Alyssa. Her friends, her family, everybody had deserted her. She was even tempted to tell them that the Great Spirits were actually machines, and the ONE Great Spirt was a WOMAN. But she couldn't. She had taken a stupid vow.

So she tossed and turned for two nights, when the thought struck her. Her friends were too lazy to help her! In a few years their brains would be non-existent. "It's the machines," she said to herself. "All these machines to do everything for us. No wonder we're lazy."

The next few days were spent in the library as Alyssa furiously read up on what life before the machine was like. And then the idea hit her. "That's it! I'll just unplug the Power Plug and not plug it in again!"

The next day she announced to the newspapers that the machines were the Great Spirits, and that THE Great Spirit was a woman. But she didn't tell them what she had done.

And, like I said before, what can I say? They all lived happily ever after.

THE GREAT SPIRIT

Long, long ago, back to before the beginning of time, when there were no people, no land, no space, nothing material, there were forms of life. They were masses of life - they had no form surrounding them. They were lives in themselves. They were very content to roam around the void that would become galaxies, solar systems and universes. They were just lives, filled with life. They had been like this forever. They had never been born, they would never die. Or so it seemed. Until suddenly the void began to change. It chanted so that it choked the life and a new thing began to be known to the life: death. The death was born and it multiplied, making itself known to all the life. As soon as the life made contact with death, it was death itself. The life began to die, and fear was born. Out of this, evil came, until all was chaos and evil and death. It seemed as if there was no hope. It had all died out long ago. This, though, was untrue. There was some hope left. It was hiding.

A life ran from death. Fear was overtaking it. Evil was around it. Chaos was everywhere. Until the life unexpectedly ran into the last hope. The two together created faith, and although the life and the hope were overtaken and killed by the death, the faith remained. The faith in itself contained both life and hope and, therefore, it was the best thing remaining in the void. It realized what had to be done. It went among the death and the remaining life. The faith could not be overtaken by the death and so it gave new faith, hope and life to the remaining life. The life gained goodness, and began to build walls around the death. The walls became planets, stars, suns, and many other things.

One wall was not built around death alone. A life was trapped inside. Because of this life, the wall flourished and grew. Life forms appeared on the wall, and the life forms were surrounded with bodies. The life forms helped each other, and played, having hope and faith. After a long time, the body would be claimed by death, but the life inside the body would live on, finding another body to surround it. Thus the life was saved, due to the life inside one of the death-surrounding walls - the wall called Earth.

DRAMA WRITING

It was cold. There was silence and there was darkness. A deep, even layer of crisp snow ~~on~~ covered the ground and surrounded the lonely, bare trees. Their blackened branches were crooked, and looked like hands ready to clench into fists around any life form which dared to venture close by.

The old, wise ice-covered mountains formed a circular sheild around the isolated forest. ~~and~~ There was no colour in the face of the sky—but her del? grey and blackness made way for the glittering stars of hope to peer down on a little village.

In the village many eyelids blinked, many feet tramped, many hands clapped and rubbed to keep warm, but very few hearts thumped at a healthy pace. There were young people and old people living in that village, ~~and~~ but all shared the same problems. They were sad and hungry. All vegitation and most of the animals had died during the long, freezing winter and because of this all the land was ~~enduring~~ suffering traumatic pain.

No one had seen ~~day for~~ the godess of day or the great gods of heat and warmth for many passings of the moon god. There must have been a misunderstanding. Never before had their gods let them down, the people were devastated.

At this point, the story that was read in class continues with the dancing and singing and the chosen one is called. My story picks up again when he comes down from the mountain, now knowing what needs to be done.

"The chosen one could feel his heart beating stronger with every step he took towards the village. Now, ~~to~~ it was his duty to teach the people the true reason for their suffering. He had the wisdom to ~~teach~~ spread the message and he had the strength and power, but he wondered if he had the heart; the warmth and love inside him to melt the ice and cold of the village and keep them away forever.

When he met his wife at the bottom of the hill, he glared into her eyes. Like the rest of the people, she had cold, clouded eyes, with very little shine or life in them. She smiled for she was glad to see him safe home, but her lips lacked the fire and liveliness that his now had and their embrasse only made them shiver.

He knew she would be the first one he'd teach.

"Take ~~my~~ hand and come with me," he spoke softly and eagerly, "I will show you the new way to live, without taking from others to feed and clothe yourself and make yourself happy. You will see that these things can only be found in yourself, and ~~given to~~ shared with others."

With that they flew not in body, but in mind to beyond this land of sorrow and despair. They went where they could see what all ~~men and~~ creatures truly desire. A place where everyone took life ~~and~~ as a challange to be happy; a test to be completed by self motivation and learning and understanding others. This place was an immage of peace, but it was different to everyone who tried to see it since it was really just a look at themselves.

During the next few weeks the experience was passed on and on and soon all of the people learned to be free from others and to live with themselves. Miraculusly, the weather improved. It was though the gods had become better as the people had become better and all the land was never again so sad, lonely and hungry.

On the occasion that someone felt unwell, he or she looked into his or herself and found the strenghth to go on.

APPENDIX F

Special Education Students

Charles' novel

MY IMAGINARY TRIP TO FLORIDA

I left Toronto at 7:30 a.m. with my friend Owen in my new red Lambourghini that I had just received for my sixteenth birthday from my parents. It was Saturday, January 15th, a sunny winter day. We made it to London Ontario at 8:15 a.m and had breakfast with my grandmother. That was the last family relation we saw for two months. After stopping in Windsor for lunch we entered the United States and continued driving all night taking turns. We reached Florida the next evening June 16th in time for dinner. We were on route 75 entering Jenning when our adventure began.

We had pulled into a MacDonalds and were having a feast when we saw Gary a teacher at our school across the road at a gas station talking to a man. We decided to go over and talk to him when the man he was talking to pulled a gun on him and forced him into the driver's side and sped away. Following in my car, we raced along route 75 and turned on to route 4 into Tallahassee. To our surprise, he went to the police station. Owen and I couldn't figour out what was going on.

We had just decided to go into the police station when Gary came running out and jumped into a police car. Now even more confused we decided to follow him. Gary went through Gainersville without stopping. We followed him on route 75 to Busch Gardens where he drove into a wooded area and hid the car. The next thing Gary did was walk into the bush. Only one of us could follow him so Owen did and I waited. One of the smart things I did was to get a phone in my car. After about half hour Owen called to say Gary caught a bus on route 75 again so I picked up Owen and then we caught up to the bus after about 20 minutes. Gary got off of the bus and got into a Ferrari.

Gary continued on route 75 to route 4 and on into Cape Canaveral. Gary went to the Kennedy Space Center and spoke with the guard. He drove up to the main building and entered the building. We saw the package. When Owen and I tried to enter the guard told us this was a restricted area and we couldn't go in.

After about an hour Gary came out with another package, got into his car again and drove back onto route 4. By now we were getting tired of all this so we slowed down and stopped following. We decided to stop for gas pulled into an Esso station and had some lunch and relaxed.

Owen and I decided to go to Tarpin Springs to do some fishing and foget about Gary. We spent a good week fishing checking out the girls and partying in Tarpin Springs until one day after a fishing trip we returned to the dock only to find a crowd around the body of a man they had pulled out of the ocean with a bullet hole in his head. Owen spotted Gary but we had to look twice because he was growing a beard and looked really different. Gary looked right at us then turned and walked away. After that we went to Orlando and enjoyed a week of Disney World - lots of rides, girls and interesting things. On our way to St. Petersburg Gary appeared behind us in his Ferrari. We continued on to a hotel named Fast Eddies where we checked in to do some golfing. We didn't know Gary had checked in down the road and was now following us.

The next day Owen and I were on the golf course having a good game when Gary pulled up in a golf cart and dropped a package in my golf bag. We followed him back to the cars where he told us he was being followed. Gary asked us if we could deliver the package to Miami Beach to a house #34 on Ash Street. He didn't want to ask us but the person he was to meet had been killed in Tarpin Springs. He was the man we had seen on the dock.

Gary didn't get to finish what he was saying when a black van with two men started shooting at us. We jumped into our cars and sped away. They followed Gary so Owen and I checked out and headed south to Miami. We stopped in Sarasota for lunch and realized the black van had found us. I drove into the Everglades on some dirt roads. That's when I decided to see how fast this car would go.

It was about 10 minutes before we lost them. I felt good about my new car. Just as we reached the highway the black van cut us off. One of the men got out and came up beside my door. I quickly opened the door and nailed him in the chin knocking him out. Four more guys got out. Two were holding Gary who had been beaten up. The other two started after us. I took a couple of shots to the face and then I came back and beat the living shit out of him. Owen took care of his since was smaller. We walked up to the two guys holding Gary and they asked us where the package was. Owen said we didn't have it anymore and I told Owen to help Gary then I took on the two thugs. Owen helped Gary into the car then came to help me who was getting the crap knocked out. We won and were all in bad shape but managed to get Gary to the hospital. On the way Gary told us to take the package to the head of the FBI in Miami Beach. After we left Gary we kept checking to see that we weren't being followed.

On the way we opened the package and were disappointed to find a thing that looked like a chanel changer. We had no further trouble so we took the package to the head of the FBI where we found out that it was really a remote control for a bomb to be set off in the White House and Gary had stolen it from a Russian agent. After that we went back to the hospital to visit Gary and found out he really wasn't a teacher but an under cover FBI agent. We spent the rest of our vacation with him and had the time of our lives.

Violet

This is a story that is about a jade hair pin. It is happened on Ching Dynasty of China.

"Oh, where is my hair pin?" asked Sui Yuk and touched her hair. "Maybe you dropped it," said her maid, Lan. Then they looked for it together. While they were looking for it, a boy picked up the hair pin from his lace of shoe then walked to them and said, "Is this your hair pin, ladies?" "Oh, yes! Thanks," said Sui Yuk. That boy gave it to her. Lan knew Sui Yuk liked him so said, "Missy, do you want to invite him to home?" "Do you want to, gentleman?" "Sure." The boy was handsome and was holding a folding white fan.

"Lan, pepare tea," said Sui Yuk. The boy sat dow beside Sui Yuk and asked, "I'm Yak See and ninten what about you?" "I'm eighteen and my name is Sui

Yuk. I earn money from sewing." "She is good at sewing," said Lan and put down the tea and stood beside Sui Yuk. "Where are your parents?" asked Yak Lee. "They were gone." "Sorry about that. My dad was gone sience I was seven. My mom earned money from washing clothes. I came to the capital for the examination this time. I hope I can do the best of all and I can be a mandarin." They were talking many things until evening. "Can you stay here for dinner?" asked Sui Yuk. "No, thank you." "Please, missy really want you to stay here." said Lan. "Shut up, Lan," said Sui Yuk and her face was red. At last, Yak Lee stayed. Few days later, they got married.

Three weeks later, the examination day came. Sui Yuk took her jade hair pin from her hair and said, "Yak, this is my jade hair pin which my mom gave me, now I give it to you. When you see this hair pin, as same as see me." "Thanks, Sui Yuk Don't worry about me, I shall be back after few months." The Yak Lee kissed her and went away.

Few months later, Yak Lee was chosen to be a mandarin. But Sui Yuk waited and waited, Yak Lee did not come back. She worried about him very much Slowly, she got sick. "Lan, you try to find about his messages or him for me." "Okay, missy."

When Lan was walking on the street, she saw Yak Lee was walking and talking with a lady. Lan walked to them and asked cooly, "Do you remember me and missy and the jade hair pin?" Then the lady asked, "Who are you?" "I'm his wife's maid." Imediately the lady ran away angrily. Lan said, "missy is sick because of you and she can't work, one day poorer than one day!" "So what? What you want is just mon right?" Yak Lee took out some money and ~~gave her~~ the hair pin and gave her. "Missy want to see you." Yak Lee thought a while then said, "If you made my wife ran away I won't care about her any more." Then he walked away.

"Lan, you are back. Did you hear messages about him or see him?" Lan nodded and then took out the money and hair pin. "Missy, he has anothe wife." "Really?" Lan nodded. After a while, Sui Yu spilt out some blood and cough. "Missy, are yo okay?" Then Sui Yuk was gone.

APPENDIX G

SELF CONCEPT, LEARNING STYLE, AND BEHAVIOURAL MEASURES

SELF CONCEPT, LEARNING STYLE, AND BEHAVIOURAL MEASURES

All of these measures were administered on a pre- and post-test basis to both experimental and comparison classes in both years. Pre-testing was carried out during the last week of September, before the Creative Drama program began. Post-testing in grade 7 was conducted in the final week of the program early in June 1986, and in grade 8 during the first two weeks of May 1987.

In general, there were no statistically significant differences between the experimental and the comparison groups on any of these measures. There were, however, some differences worth noting, and these are described in the applicable sections below. As there was little difference in the results obtained on any of these measures between the regular classes within each school, we have combined them.

Self Concept

The self concept results are contained in the following chart:

SELF CONCEPT

	GRADE 7		GRADE 8	
CLASS	Pre-test	Post-test	Pre-test	Post-test
EXPERIMENTAL				
Regular Classes	17.5	18.0	16.4	15.7
Gifted	18.6	17.8	16.8	15.4
COMPARISON				
Regular Classes	18.0	17.6	17.7	16.2
Gifted	18.2	17.0	18.0	16.6

The North York norm for the Self Concept Inventory is 17 for grade 7, and 16.6 for grade 8. The pre-test mean scores were high in grade 7 and tended to show a slight decline on the post-test. This may merely reflect the regression to the mean, which is not unusual on this measure at the end of the year.

The grade 8 pre-test scores were lower than that of grade 7 and though both experimental and comparison groups experienced a decline on the post-test scores, the decrease was slightly smaller in the regular experimental classes than in the regular comparison classes.

Learning Style

The Preferred Learning Mode is a ten-item instrument used as an indicator of brain hemisphere preference in learning. Scoring is based on a scale of 1.0 - 2.0. The degree of left brain preference is determined by the lower end of the scale within the range of 1.0 - 1.4. Right brain preference is measured in the upper end of the scale, in a range of 1.6 - 2.0. The middle score of 1.5 is considered to reflect a whole brain learning mode. Creativity is assumed to be associated with right brain preference.

The results obtained on this measure are contained in the following table.

PREFERRED LEARNING MODE

	GRADE 7		GRADE 8	
CLASS	Pre-test	Post-test	Pre-test	Post-Test
EXPERIMENTAL				
Regular Classes	1.47	1.49	1.51	1.56
Gifted	1.42	1.54	1.49	1.49
COMPARISON				
Regular Classes	1.49	1.45	1.49	1.51
Gifted	1.49	1.41	1.51	1.43

Though there was very little change on this measure, the regular experimental classes showed a slight but steady movement toward greater right brain preference.

Personality Inventory

We used the six scales of this Inventory which measure behaviours we believed could be influenced by the Creative Drama program. Each of the scales contained 20 questions with the exception of the measure of Responsibility which had 19. The results are recorded in the chart below.

PERSONALITY INVENTORY

	Conformity		Energy Level		Innovation		Organization		Responsibility		Social Participation	
CLASS	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
EXPERIMENTAL												
Regular Classes												
Grade 7	10.6	10.6	10.2	10.8	11.6	12.7	9.8	8.8	11.7	12.2	11.8	12.7
Grade 8	10.1	9.6	11.7	10.6	12.7	13.1	8.9	9.1	11.5	11.4	11.4	11.7
Gifted												
Grade 7	11.3	10.7	12.0	11.6	14.0	13.4	11.2	9.3	13.7	14.2	12.0	11.5
Grade 8	11.3	11.6	13.2	11.6	13.1	13.6	9.4	9.0	14.0	12.6	12.3	12.9
COMPARISON												
Regular Classes												
Grade 7	11.2	11.6	11.2	11.9	12.9	12.7	10.2	9.2	13.0	12.9	12.3	12.8
Grade 8	11.7	10.1	11.9	12.5	13.5	12.5	9.4	8.9	12.8	12.4	12.8	12.6
Gifted												
Grade 7	12.1	11.5	12.1	10.6	14.4	14.6	11.7	11.9	13.6	14.4	12.1	11.7
Grade 8	12.3	12.0	11.5	10.5	14.0	13.2	10.1	10.1	12.7	12.5	11.9	11.7

Though statistically there were no changes on these measures, there is some indication of a slightly greater williness to be innovative on the part of the experimental students. This was one of the behaviours the drama program sought to enhance.

We have a general concern that this inventory may not have been sufficiently sensitive to the kind of change observed in the drama classes.

It may also have been unrealistic to have expected that any real change in the type of personality traits such an inventory measures would occur.